

True Account

Of

What was done by a Church
of Christ in *Exon* (whereof Mr.
Lewis Stucley is Pastor) the
eighth day of *March*, 1657.
when two members thereof
were Excommunicated.

together with the Judgement of the Non-
conformists in the dayes of *Q. Elizabeth*,
and *K. James*, concerning Excommu-
nication by a particular Church.

blished by an eye and ear-witness.

Rev. Tho. Mall

could thy lyes make men hold their peace?
And when thou mockest, shall no man make
thee ashamed? *Job chap. 11. ver. 3.*

Nil dictum quod, non dictum prius.

L O N D O N,

Printed by R. W. for *Matthew Keinton*, at the Fountain
in *Pauls Church-yard*. 1658.

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*Ecclē Excommunicati ab Ecclesia sunt
in potestate Satana ad interitum car-
nis, 1 Cor. 5. Si vero penitentiam a-
gunt, & recipiuntur, tum à Satana li-
berantur. Histor. Nagdeb. cent. 1. li. 2.
p. 135, 47.*

*EXcommunicationem indicari per modum illum loquendi
quo Apostolus usus est, 1 Cor. 5. 5. & 1 Tim. 1. 20.
Nempe tradere Satana ad interitum carnis, rectē judica-
runt multi ex veteribus, quia extra Ecclesiam Satanas
regnat. Synop. Pur. Theol. conscript. P. Poliandrum, Rive-
tum, Walæum, Thyfium, Disp. 48. 40.*

WHAT is Excommunication? A giving up to Sa-
tan. Greenham. p. 843. of his works.

ONE and the last of the Spiritual means of fear is Ex-
communication, whereby men are delivered to Sa-
tan, 1 Cor. 5. 5. that delivering of the incestuous person can-
not be a bare bodily punishment, but an excluding of a sin-
ner from the Communion and fellowship of the Church
& must be done in the face of the Church by the consent

of the whole Church, as appears *ver. 2. & 4. Perkins on Jude. p. 587.*

THE greater Excommunication (as distinct from suspension) putteth the Excommunicate from the Sacrament of the Lords body and blood, and depriveth them of all that comfort ; and strength of Grace which from it they might receive : it denieth to them the benefit of the Churches publique Prayers, and so leaveth them to themselves as forlorn and miserable wretches, and whence it is that they are said to be delivered, to Satan ; because they are left (naked and void of all means to make resistance) unto his Will and Pleasure. *Field of the Church. p. 23, 24.*

Neither is it any thing else then Excommunication which the Apostle signifieth by delivering to Satan, *1 Cor. 5. 5.*

Thorndick in his discourse of the right of the Church in a Christian state. *page 34.*

The Censure of Excommunication cutteth men off from the Conversation of Christians, which forfeit the priviledges, to which they pretend, and so delivers them to Satan by consequence, as those that lodged without the camp of *Israel*, were in danger to be licked up by the *Amalekite*, *1 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 20.* *Thorndick* in his *Primitive Government of Churches, page 91.*

THE end of excommunication is that he may be ashamed, that he may see himself alone, no company but the Devil thought bad enough for him, and so be brought to sense and shame of his own vilness, which is the most necessary preparative to reformation, and therefore

fore though a little before, binding, Excommunicating, delivering to Satan be made *Synonima's*. It followeth, Excommunication it is an Act of Mercy and Charity of all other the greatest, though under the shew of severity and wrath. Doctor *Hammon* of the power of the keyes, p. 117.

IF the terror and horror of Excommunication (to be cast out of the Church, and delivered up into the power of Satan) win not a sinner, nothing will. *Caudry* Church reform. promoted. p. 65.

The last remedy is to shame him when he shall see himself abhorred and forsaken of all good men, and when all the People avoid his company as a leproous person, accounting him not fit for humane society, being delivered to Satan. *Idem*. p. 68.

Excommunication. is a delivering a man over to the power of Satan. *Idem*. p. 85.

IOHAN Cornford (one of the six last that were burnt in England for the true Religion) when he heard himself, and his followers excommunicated, stirred with a vehement zeal of God, and proceeding in a more true excommunication against the Papists: in the name of them all pronounced sentence against them in these words. *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Power of his holy Spirit, and the Authority of his holy Catholick and Apostolick Church, We do give here into the hands of Satan to be destroyed the bodies of all those Blasphemers and Hereticks that do maintain any error against his most holy Word, or do condemn his most holy Truth for Heresie, to the maintaining of any false Church or feigned Religion: So that by this thy just judgement, most mighty God against thine Adversaries, thy true Religion may be known to*

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thy Glory and our Comforts, and to the edifying of all our Nation; good Lord so be it. *Trap on John 9.22.*

I Am their same opinion, who interpret the delivering to Satan of Excommunication, and so doth *Gualter* himself; so doth the Syriack which readeth; that you (*Corinthians* may deliver such an one to Satan. If it was an act of the Church of *Corinth*, then it was a Church-sentence not a Miracle. The Greek doth also carry it to be an Act of the Church of *Corinth* assembled together. We have also some, (though not all) of the Antients for us in this particular: as *Balsamon* in *Canon. Epist Basilij ad Amphiloek. Can.7.* observeh. *Gillespy's* Aarons-rod blossoming. p.435.

Whether the Power of Excommunication *in actu primo, seu quoad esse* did belong to the collective body of the Church of *Corinth* or not, is a question controverted and to this day, *sub judice lis est*; yet even those who hold the affirmative part of the question, do notwithstanding say, that *in actu secundo, seu quoad operari*, the power pertained to their Bresbytery, which is confirmed by 2 *Cor.2.6* where the Apostle speaking of the censure of that incestuous man, saith not that it was inflicted by all, but by many, the Pastors and Elders of *Corinth*; how be it the execution and final act of that high censure was to be with the consent, and in the Presence of the Congregation. *Gillespy's* Assertion of the Government of the Church of *Scotland.* p.115,116.

I Deny not but the faithfull convened; or were to convene in this meeting, 1 *Cor. 5.* with the eldership, &c. but the meeting is demonstrated pastoral and presbyterial with Spiritual Power from the special intended end in that

that act which was authoritatively to deliver the Fornicator to Satan. *Rutherford. peaceable plea. p. 235.*

One and the same word *ἐκκλῆσιαν* to purge out the heaven, 1 Cor. 5. 7. applied both to Elders and Believers hath divers meanings according as it is applied to divers subjects ; so that the Elders did purge out and excommunicate one way, that is authoritatively, &c. and the people did purge out the heaven another way, by a popular consenting that he should be excommunicate. *Rutherford's peaceable plea for Pauls Presbytery in Scotland. p. 236.*

A *Pollonius* saith, that the *Walacrian* Churches hold, that Classes and Synods have power to cast out from the Communion of the Churches, as a Heathen and a Publican, and to deliver to Satan an obstinate offending Church, p. 130. in English.

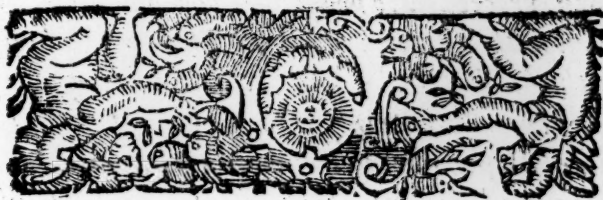
Rules for Admission.

That such who desire to walk with God, and his people in all ordinances, &c. Be at a Church-meeting proposed to the Church for their approbation and admission. That they do then solemnly and seriously profess their faith and Repentance before all the Congregation, &c. That they do then seriously and solemnly covenant and promise, to walk with God and his People (particularly the Church to which they now joyn themselves) according to the Rules of the Word of God, *Dent. 29. 1. 9. to the end : Nehem. 9. 38. and chap. 10. 1, 29. Josh. 24. 21, 28. 2 Cor. 8. 5.* That if the Church do approve of their conversation, and profession, they be received ; otherwise, desired to forbear, or excluded til the Church be satisfied ; By the Church here is meant the whole body : or the Major number of the men at least, &c.

Particular Rules for walking in Church-Order.

THat all Admitted, &c. Yield and submit themselves to the Discipline of Christ in his Church, as it shall be made known to us from the Word: and may be to Edification exercised in our particular Congregation, 2 Cor. 8. 5. 1 Cor. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5, 6. Heb. 13. 17, &c. That the consent of the whole Church, or at least the greater part of the men, be taken by the Pastor and Officers, in matters of weight and moment, 1 Cor. 5. 4, &c. That such as shall privately offend, be first privately admonished; if that prevail not, then with two or three; if that prevail not, then let the matter be declared to the Church, and the offender publicly admonished by the Pastor: if that prevail not, let him be accounted as an *Heathen, and a Publican*, Mat. 18. 15, &c. That such as sin openly, be more speedily and severely dealt withal, and proceeded against, 1 Tim. 5. 20, 24, 25. 1 Cor. 5. per tot. Mr. John Tuckel in his Church-Rules, pag. 4, 5, 7.

TO



To the Impartial Reader.

Reader,



*Judge it needless for me to make any Apologie for my thus coming forth in Print; if these Papers do not that for the Publisher: 'Tis past the power of his Epistle, I shall no longer detain thee from their perusal, then to tell thee how they are connected. Understand therefore that the 8th of this instant March was appointed by a Church of Christ in this City, for the cutting off two offenders, that had been found guilty of several miscarriages; and of refusing private and publick admonition: In the beginning of the day, one of the Elders gave a brief Relation of the ends of their meeting: and then beg'd the presence of God with the Church in that days-work. Afterwards the Pastor Mr Lewis Stucley preached. The notes of which Sermon, I am glad I took in short-hand from his mouth, or otherwise thou mightest never have seen a true Copy of them. Sermon being ended, he prayed,
and*

The Epistle.

and then proceeded to pronounce the sentence, which he closed with a second prayer. This great business being thus dispatched; some reasons were given for the Churches Re-entring into Covenant: and then a divine Blessing being implored; there was a subscription of all present, both Officers and Members.

Thus hast thou a brief account of the most material passages of that day. Now because the main work thereof, viz. Excommunication by a particular Church furnished with Officers, is become so great a wonder; I have annexed some Sheets gathered out of some Rare Pieces of men Famous in their, and this Generation, relating to that affair. If my transcriptions either of the Sermon, or of the eminent old Non-conformists Assertions and Reasons be imperfect; I hope thou wilt over-look all the Errat's: seeing I had very few dayes (not weeks) for the collecting, and writing the whole for the Press. If thou beest resolved to try all things, and hold fast that which is good: and not to entertain or reject anything for its seeming Novelty: I doubt not, but after thou hast perused this Discourse: thou wilt account me

Exon. March .22.

1657,

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Thine, and the
Truths friend

Thomas Mall

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1 Cor. 5. 5.

To deliver such a one unto Satan for the Destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.



N the former part of this Chapter we have these two things :

1. The Apostles reprehension of the neglect of Church-Discipline.

And secondly, The Apostles care to supply the neglect thereof.

First, The Apostles Reprehension of the neglect of Church-Discipline ; where we have

1. A Church Delinquent, but one in the Chapter, or but one notorious ; an incestuous person, that is, but one to such a height as was fitted, and prepared for the throwing out : and under this head we have 1. the nature of his sin described ; and that two wayes :

1. It was incest ; and then 2. such as the Heathens would not allow, they detested it *verse 1.* It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication, as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, &c. And as we have the nature of the sin ;

So secondly we have the notoriety, the publikeness of it. It is commonly reported, generally known *verse 1.* But then, as we have a Church-Delinquent fitted for Excommunication : So 2. Here we have the Churches sin ; and the Church is charged for three things.

1. That they rested in a good opinion of their own condition, while they were not chargeable with such an abomination : they prided themselves likely, and likely were puffed up, that they were not so unclean, as that man *ver. 2.* And ye are puffed up, &c. 3. He accuseth them for not publicly forrowing for this scandalous sinner *ver. 2.* and have not rather mourned, &c. That which the Apostle expected from them was, that they should have demeaned themselves in such a manner, as that they should have evidenced to others, that they were sensible that God was dishonoured, and that they abominated such a sin.

But

But then thirdly, he chargeth them for their neglecting to excommunicate this man *ver. 2.* And have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you. He would have had them so to have sorrowed, as that their sorrow should have ended in Excommunication. But it is not the work of the Apostle to charge home sin only; But

Secondly, The Apostles care is also to supply their neglect: and here we have 1. the Apostle encouraging of this Church to proceed to a sentence *ver. 3.* For I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, &c. as if he had said, I am free to do what I put you upon doing; and 2. as if he did not much doubt that they would submit: he sheweth the manner how the sentence must be executed *ver. 4.* In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, &c. 3. He sheweth them who is the efficient cause of Excommunication; and here is a principal cause; the Power of the Lord Jesus Christ concurring with his Church *ver. 4.* with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the Ministerial cause, the Church *ver. 4.* when ye are gathered together. 4. That things may be well managed, he setteth down the form of Excommunication: to deliver the Church-Delinquent to Satan, *ver. 5.* To deliver such a one to Satan. 5. He giveth them the end of this Church-Discipline; and that is double. 1. The destruction of the flesh. 2. that the soul may be saved *ver. 5.* to deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Give me leave a little, as it were in a paraphrase, to run over the words to my Text. As if the Apostle had said, It is a great shame, and reproach that lieth upon you, that sins of unnatural uncleanness are found among you. And that such offences are committed among you, as civil nations, though not Christians would abhor to be guilty of; namely, a son to use his fathers wife; and you are so far from being humbled at this, that you are secure, and puffed up with your Priviledges, that you do not mind the dishonour of God hereby: you do not consider that this is a crime fit for censure; Now the Apostle supposing their consciences are convinced of this sin, and enquiring what is to be done? He tels them *ver. 3.* that his judgement is, that he should be excommunicated: and least they should say, we will not do it without thee in thy absence; to remove that, he tells them, that though he be absent from them, yet that should not hinder: for though I be absent, I am of this Judgement *ver. 3.* For I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed. But we know not how to proceed against him, we are convinced he ought to be removed, But how shall it be done? Why, saith the Apostle,

Let the Church be convened.

postle, get a Church meeting ; and the power of the Lord Jesus will be with them so met, and what then ? Why, Excommunicate him. How shall that be done ? Deliver him over to Satan. I, but this is a very unlikely means to reduce him ; Is Satan to help the Church ? or will Satan be useful to save the sinner ? Yea, saith the Apostle : though Satan intentionally will not reduce a sinner, yet God will over-rule him ; God will use him, and employ him in the work ; therefore Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The observation I shall give you is this :

That it is the will of God, that a Church of Christ should excommunicate their scandalous members, when they remain incorrigible.

Here we are to consider these things. First, Who those are that are to Excommunicate. Secondly, Wherein Excommunication lyeth. Thirdly, Why the Church must Excommunicate. Fourthly, What a fearful Sentence this is. Fifthly, Answer some Objections, and give the matter of Fact, and so some uses.

First, Who are to Excommunicate ? the fourth verse tells you, when ye are gathered together, the Church convened : the Authority of Excommunication pertaineth to the whole Church : So Mr. Leigh on this Scripture. The Apostle would not take the whole power to himself, saith Peter Martyr, he would not Excommunicate him alone ; the Pope and the Bishops have been bold this way : but so would not the Apostle. But when ye are gathered together. It is a dangerous course that so great a Sentence, as is Excommunication (saith Peter Martyr) should be in the hand of one particular person : If the power were in the Apostle alone, the Apostle were more blame-worthy then the Church, for suffering this unclean member in this Church ; but the Apostle blameth the Church, that they did not cast him out ; they should have taken him away from among them ver. 3. And he prescribeth the manner of excommunication to them, that they might proceed upon him ; and after he presseth them to put the sentence in execution : that they should purge away the old leaven ver. 7. And again ver. 13. that they should put away from among themselves that wicked person : The Arguments to enforce this Exhortation concern the whole Church : From the danger of infection ; that is one ; such a sin being as leaven, that will diffuse from the whole lump ; the whole are in danger ver. 6. 7. your glorying is not good : know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump ? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened : Again, the whole were to keep the Christian-pass-over, as the Jews did theirs ; where the Leaven was

to be cast out of every house, and every one was to contribute what he could to the casting it out. Besides the Apostle had written a former Epistle to this Church, wherein he had advised the whole Church not to keep company with Fornicators, verse 9. such he means as they had power over; for some there were that were without, and these he leaveth to Gods judgement, verse 13.

Object. The Papists (and so others) object, that though the Apostle commanded that the Act should be done in the face of the Church, yet (say they) the Judgement and Authority of giving sentence, was in himself, and not in the whole multitude, as the Protestants affirm.

Ans. It seems then the Protestants hold so, that it lieth in the Church, if the Author of the *Rhemish* Testament wrong them not.

2. The Papists also (it seems) grant that the Act should be done in the face of the whole Church; and if excommunication of members; then admission of Members should be in the face of the whole Church. There is the same reason for the admission of Members into the Church, as for the casting of them out. I wish this were considered by them who admit, and suspend Members in corners and Chambers, without the privitie of them that should be present at such a work.

3. But for a full answer to this, let Mr. Cartwright give it in his notes on the *Rhemish* Testament. First, It is clear (saith he) that though the Apostle judged him worthy of excommunication yet if the Ministers of the Church, with the rest of the Body, had not shut him out, he had not been taken for a Publican. Secondly, It is clear the Apostle would not have them do it, but when gathered together: he would not have them to excommunicate him, but at a Church-meeting, &c.

Object. The Papists object further, that the Church are but witnesses and lookers on of the Action.

Ans. Mr. Cartwright giveth many Answers to this.

1. First, (saith he) if the Church were only assembled to bear witness; then Pauls Spirit was only to bear witness: for the personal presence of the Church, and the Apostles spiritual presence were met together in this affair. Besides.

2. He saith, Do not ye judge them that are within; surely that is much more then to be Witnesses, and Lookers on; for the Apostle useth the same work to declare the Churches Power, as he doth to declare his own Power; and how unlikly is it that the same word in the same chapter, about the same matter, should signifie to judge when applied to Paul, and to be but a Witness, when applied to the Church?

And that we are not alone in this; to this also agreeth Dr. Fuller on the *Rhemish* Testament. The Authority of excommunication

(saith

(saith he) pertaintaineth to the whole Church, and the Governours execute that Authority in the name of Christ, and in the name of the Church to avoid confusion. Thus saith *Paræus* on the place, the Church are not witnesses only: but judges of this Action, and he concurs with *Peter Martyr*, of whom before.

So Mr. *Rutherford* (that great champion for Presbytery) the Apostle (saith he) sheweth what was their duty as Christians convened together in a Church-way: the Apostle doth not command one christian, but the Church gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus to cast him out; we apply it (saith he) to the casting of scandalous persons out of the Church, as leaven was to be put out of the Houses of all who were to eat the Passover. But.

Secondly, Wherein lieth Excommunication? It lieth in the Churches, delivering up a scandalous impenitent sinner to Satan: It lieth in turning such a one out of the house of God; and from the company of the Lords people, and putting him into the Kingdom and power of the Devil. To make his sentence full, three things are requisite (though not all alike necessary.) 1. It should pass from a good intention and heart; and not from a revengeful principle. 2. It should be when the cause is just and clear, and clearly proved.

And 3. Executed according to Christs order, that is, after private Admonition, unless the sin be publique as the incestuous persons was; when we have gone privately, and then more publicly; (if the offence be private) and the party remain incorrigible, then the sentence is to be pronounced in a Church-assembly convened for that end, in the name of Christ, and then it is of validity, yea of such validity, that Christ hath said expressly, *whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven*, Mat. 18.18.

It is a committing the incorrigible delinquent unto Satan, not an absolute giving of him up, but a committing to him, as of a prisoner to a Jailor. *Non dedendum sed committendum* saith *Asanasius* on the place.

First he is not delivered to Satan morally, this is a sinfull deliverance to give over one to Satan that he may work in him as in his work-house, and as in a child of disobedience. Eph. 2.2. for we suppose that a soul already converted, may be excommunicated, but he cannot be thus delivered unto Satan, so as to be under that power that natural men are. But.

Secondly, he is delivered unto Satan penally, to a penal Torturer, and who is to work sorrow and fear in the conscience for sin, and to scare the Offender, and that way to humble him, that so the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

This form of Excommunication. as *Deodati* and *Paræus* think, is taken

taken from *Saul*, (1 Sam. 16, 14.) when rejected of the Lord. For Excommunication is a partial rejection from God, and whilst the party is excommunicated, those influences from God that were wont to be given, are suspended from him, though a gracious soul. In the primitive times it was followed with horrors of Spirit, and torments of body. And *Josephus* reports that those that were found in any considerable sin, and cast out of the congregation, came to some miserable death. To be short, I suppose that the essence of excommunication lieth in severing sinners from Saints Communion and so throwing them back into Satans Kingdom. Delivering to Satan, includeth two things. 1. Here is *terminus a quo*, from whence delivered from the Church: from the Society of the Faithfull they are taken off from them, and then 2. *terminus ad quem*, unto whom, and that is said to be the devil. The word *Deliver* in signification it is a relative word, it seemeth to have a relation to asking or demanding. The Devil he is called the *Accuser of the Brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. and he is called an *Adversary*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. or an *Implacer*; When he hath an Accusation against a Church or Member: he demands to have the sinner delivered over to him, that he may torment him, and the Lord is pleased to answer this request of his, and bid- deth the Church deliver up the Offendor to Satan; and he is so delivered up, when he is thrust out from before the Lord, and ex- cluded from the Saints communion; he is no longer to be account- ed (saith *Bareus*) *membrum Christi & ecclesiae, sed Satanae*) a mem- ber of Christ and the Church, but a member of Satan of Satans Kingdom. But then.

3. Why must the Church excommunicate, or why must they deli- ver to Satan? Before I shall answer this, for method-sake I shall premise that look, as hell consist in *pæna damni & pæna sensus*, so doth this punishment in the pain of loss, and the pain of sense: here somewhat that the sinner is deprived of, and somewhat that he is sensibly under, as a misery and torment; somewhat he is cut off from, and deprived of, and some positive evil that he lieth un- der: he is deprived of the society of Gods people, and actually set under the tormenting power of the devil; we need not puzel our- selves much, what course Satan takes with the Offendor so deli- vered: sure it is such a Power that he hath over him, as Christ hath appointed for the *destruction of the flesh, that the soul may be saved*. Accordingly I shall put this into two questions.

Quest. 1. *Why are scandalous members to be cut off from the commu- nion of Saints?*

Quest. 2. *Why are they to be delivered to Satan?*

Quest. 1. *Why are they to be cut off from the house of God?*

Ans. 1. Because that God hath forsaken them, and therefore

For so should the Church: God is departed from them, and therefore the Church should leave them: the ground of our Union with them (whom we are to proceed on) was their visible closing with Christ: now when that visibility ceaseth, when that outward appearance of religion ceaseth, the Union is to be dissolved. It was founded and built upon visible holiness, and when visible holiness ceaseth, the Union must cease: he that opposeth God and Christ in his Laws, is to be opposed by all that are Christs: there ought to be the same mind in all that are the servants of Christ, that was in Christ their Master; they are to esteem whom Christ esteemeth, and to hate whom he hateth; when these persons outwardly closed with Christ, they outwardly subscribed, that they would be the Lords; and therefore we owned them: now they have cast away these cords from them, they have broken Covenant, neglected the house of God, contemned admonition private and publique, &c.

2. Therefore are they are be cast out from Communion, because indeed there can be no Communion with them. They being acted by indifferent Laws, they cannot be owned: we cannot walk with them: they that are sound, they own Christ as their Law-giver and Head; these reject him as their Law-giver and Head; we cannot agree with such: Sanctity and Sensuality cannot agree; the Motions and Original of the godly and wicked are contrary: the Saints Original is from Heaven, and the wicked mans from earth, and their motion are contrary, the one downward, the other upward, like two ballances, if one goeth up, the other goeth downward, therefore they must needs be put on contrary practises: for that which is *born of the flesh* will oppose that which is *born of the Spirit*; and though *Jacob* and *Esau* may for a while be in the womb of the Church, yet there will be struggling till they part, they cannot admit of no accommodation: What *Communion hath Light with Darkness*? What *Concord hath God with Belial*? What part have *Believers with Infidels*? What agreement hath the *Temple of God with Idols*. The Apostle bids us in the *2 Cor. 6. 14, 15, 16*. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers, for what fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness*? &c. Depart from me all ye *Workers of Iniquity*; saith *David*, *Psal. 6. 8*. It is an intollerable Wo to good men to be forced to be amongst wicked men. *Psal. 120. 5*. *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar*. But then.

3. God hath promised his peculiar residence among his Church, but he hath not promised it, save upon these terms, that he may be in a clean house, and not among beasts, now all contumacious persons are as beasts, God will not dwell with them, he com-

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pareth them to Spiders and Cockatrices, *Isa. 59. 5.* to Vipers, *Mat. 23. 34.* to Scorpions. *Ezek. 2. 6.* these are no fit company for God or Man, therefore to be cast out: look into the Scriptures again, and you shall see that wicked men are called Lions, and they are savage, *Psal. 22. 21.* they are called Bears, *Isa. 11. 7.* and they are cruel, they are called Dragons, *Ezek. 29. 3.* and they are abominable, *Dogs*, *Mat. 7. 6.* and they are bloody, they are called Wolves, *Ezek. 22. 27.* and they are ravenous.

And what, Do you think God will dwell with Wolves, Bears, Scorpions, Dogs, surely no? And therefore the Church seeing that this is the way to keep God among them, by removing Dogs (with which out are Dogs) therefore they are met together this day to remove such, in whose presence God cannot delight, nor sojourn Saints.

4. There is danger of infection to the Church, if this leaven be continued; and therefore they are to be thrown out. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*: it is the Argument of the Apostle possible in this chapter to press them to excommunication, *verse 17.* 7. *Your glorying is not good* (saith the Apostle) *Know ye not, that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened; &c.* Our English Proverb is significant, one scabbed sheep infects a whole flock: a man cannot take this fier into his bosoms, and not be burned. *Prov. 6. 28.* *Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?* neither can a man handle this pitch without defilement, *Psal. 101. 35.* *They were mingled among the heathens, and learned their words.* And therefore Mr Rutherford in his due right of of Presbyterial discipline page 76. observeth, that the power of excommunication was given by Christ to a Church upon this formal ground and reason, because a Congregation is a number of sinfull men, who may be scandalized, and who may be infected with the company of such a scandalous person, for if a Congregation were a company of Angels, which cannot be infected; such Power should not be given to them, so that as Nature hath given hands to a man to defend himself from injuries and violence: and horns to oxen to hold off violence; so Christ hath given to his Church the Power of excommunication, as spiritual Armour to ward off and defend the congregation of wicked fellowship. *Gal. 5. 9, 10.* *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but be that troubleth you, let him clear his Judgment whoever he be.*

All the members may be corrupted by one rotten one, as a rotten ear may corrupt a hoard; a Gangreen though it be in the Toe, will soon endanger the vital parts, if it be not cut off from the body natural, and it holdeth in the Church, where it maketh

Many members are in danger from one corrupted part; so that except we use the remedy appointed by God to eschew the contagion of the wicked, we are in danger: and therefore, *Prov. 22. 24, 25.* and *Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his way, and get a snare to thy soul. And say again, Prov. 5. 8, 9.* Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house, lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel. It is dangerous to come near the house of such, *Lev. 18. 4.* And I heard another Voice from Heaven, saying, Come this out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye repent her not of her plagues. And though we should not be actually corrupted, yet we shall sin, and tempt the Lord, in keeping our selves so bender such a temptation, when we have power to deliver our selves from it, by cutting off them, that will eat as a Gangreen, *2 Tim. 4. 17.* Their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenus, and Philetus. The whole lump is in danger, that is the Argument of our Apostle here. All the Church, they that are most confident, and pride themselves most are in danger: therefore the leaven is to be cast out, that is, not the sin abstractly considered; but he that hath done the deed. The Antients have been curious this way; and therefore *Sozomene* reports concerning the Emperour *Theodosius* Senior, that he being willing to confer with *Eunomius*, the *Arian* Bishop, his wife *Placilla* the Empress earnestly dissuaded him, lest being perverted by his speeches, should begin to like of his Heresie. Nothing is more difficult then to be familiar with sinners, and not to be infected by them: by being encouraged, or seduced, and even constrained to sin by the conversations of rotten fellow-members. If *Corah* be of a troublesome spirit, and be over-run with pride and envy, he quickly draweth in two hundred and fifty into his conspiracy; men famous in the Congregation and men of renown. His abode was so near the *Reubenites*, that he soon infuseth his poison into *Dathan* and *Abyran*, and had not all Israel withdrawn speedily, they had been in danger of infection with a plague. If Excommunication should not be with reference to scandalous members, Christ and his Church would suffer by connivance, and sparing this Rod: it is a kind of justifying a sinner, when we do not punish his sin, according to the power of the Lord Jesus given us for this end. Religion becometh ridiculous, and Profession is brought to scorn, when sinners are let alone; and therefore we ought to strip Christ's honour to pull off the Masking Robes; and the Virgins wherewith these have deceived us, and others to, and to advise to the world, that we do not Judge them.

But upon this account, because they rise up against the Lawes of Christ; we are to declare plainly that they are guilty of such sins, as make them not worthy of a Name in the House of God. The Apostle

posse may aim at this in the first ver. *It is certainly heard that there is fornication amongst you*; this bad report he makes the first ground of proceeding to Excommunication, as if he had said, It is a dishonour to Christ that there are such things commonly talked of; therefore timely declare against them. So say I, it is Reported that there is among you a notorious lyar, and a lawless woman, that knoweth no subjection at home and or abroad, to her own husband or to the Church of God; It will argue little affection to Christ: you let these alone, if you let Rebels against his Majesty alone; therefore purge out these, bear witness against these, that the wicked may not say, we have lyars and disobedient persons amongst us uncontrouled: *ut sitis nova massa*, that you may appear to be such a lump, such a Congregation as is unleavened.

6. Therefore are we to throw out such to deter others from sin, that these may be examples to others; when the Magistrate groweth careless, sin groweth bold, when he doth not punish sin, sinners grow bold-faced; not only the offenders themselves, but others also to sin after their similitude in hope of the same impunity, 1 Th. 5. 20. *Them that sin rebuke openly that the rest also may fear*; Here is the End of God, and this is a blessed end that others may fear.

By the way give me leave to reflect on our selves: this is a dishonour of taking shame to our selves; what do we know but that, if we had discharged our duty sooner on the lyar, we might have prevented the others fall, her disobedience and perverseness of spirit? The Lord lay not this to our charge: if publick and notorious offenders had been made publick examples, others might have feared; this is the End that God aimeth at in punishing, that all Israel should hear and fear, and do no more such wickedness, Deut. 13. 11. If we partake of their sin, we must expect to partake of their judgement.

7. And lastly, Because God delights that the punishment of a sinner be like the sin in kind: the punishment commonly bears the Image and superscription of the sin; so true is it, *that what a man sows that shall he reap*, Gal. 6. 7. God often returns the sins of Church members so on them, that they may read the name of their sin stampt upon their punishment; *Eye for eye*, that was of old, Ex. 21. 24. These have turned their backs on pure Ordinances, therefore they shall no longer enjoy them: they were careless and regardless of Church-orders; and now by the orders of the House of God, they are to be turned out from beholding our faith, and order, that they may say, as that wretched *Adonibezel*, Judg. 17. *I have done so God hath requited me*; That is a dreadful word, 2 Th. 7. 13. *therefore it is come to pass, that as he called, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of Hosts*; God hath cried by Officers, by Members, but these wretches would not hear the Church; well saith God, will not they hear me? It is

shall come to pass they shall cry, and I will not hear; Christ giveth Orders to throw them to day out of his special care, and the Churches daily inspection.

Question 2. *Why are they to be delivered to Satan?*

Answer, It may be a sufficient Reason that it is the will of God it should be so. But I shall name two other Reasons.

1. That there may be some proportion betwixt their punishment and their visible state and condition. They appear to be children of Hell, and therefore fitter for fellowship with damned spirits, then to be associates of the Lord and his people. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do, Joh. 8. 44.* If they will do the works of the Devil, the Devils company is fitter for them then the fellowship of the people of God.

Object. *But perhaps the parties have faith: and what will ye deliver such to Satan?*

Answer. I answer, they do not appear to us as Believers: they that live in the neglect of any known duty wilfully, are not to be looked on as Believers; they have no more visible faith to me then an Heathen. My Brethren, *de occultis non judicat Ecclesi*; we do not look to secret things: He that liveth in any known sin, and refuseth to repent of it, is visibly unregenerate. And that is our quarrel, or rather the Lords quarrel with them, this day ours, because the Lords. After the church hath proceeded on a person, he is to be looked on without Grace, because none appeareth but the contrary. It is said of Cain that he was of *that wicked one*, 1 John 3. 12. And all that live in sin, & blush not to be seen in the practice of it, they look like the Devil.

2. *That the flesh may be destroyed, and the spirit may be saved in the day of Christ.* But more of this by and by under the fifth general.

Fourthly, I shall shew you what a fearful sentence this is. And here I shall distinguish as before.

First, It is a fearful sentence to be cast out of a Church. A very severe sentence; and this will appear if we consider a few things.

1. Gods people in Church-Relation, they stand nearly Related unto God, in the Relation of children to a father, that is a near Relation; they are children, and God is their Father; they are sons and daughters, and he their Father; In the Relation of a wife to an Husband, the Lambs wife, so the Church is called; in as near a Relation as members to the head; *they are members of Christs body, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh*: what a fearful judgement is it to be separated from these? to be pulled as it were from the body of Christ, from the flesh of Christ? to be cut off from the bones of Christ! they are called the Excellent of the Earth, *Isa. 43. 4.* *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.* It is a credit to a man to keep company with honourable persons;

but to be turned out of their Societie is a fore, and bitter thing. For a Noble man to be degraded, and live amongst scullions; this is nothing to the being thrown out of the Assembly of Gods people among the pots of the earth.

2. There are choice blessings entailed on a Church estate, which they are cut off from. God hath said *Zeph. 3. 17. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save, he will rejoyce over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing: Here is a promise to Zion; the Lord thy God will rest in them. God will not rest with Excommunicates, Psalm 87. 2. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion, more then all the dwellings of Jacob. God delights in the publick communion of his people, inore then in all their private dwellings; these are to be turned out from that Society which God loveth. Again Isa. 46. 13. And I will place Salvation in Zion for Israel my Glory. These are to be turned out from salvation to day, from the place of salvation. The Name of the Church is *Jehovah Shammah, Ezek. 48. 35. The Lord is there: To be turned out of the place where the Lord is, how sad is it? Psal. 76. 2. In Salem is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion; What a sad thing is it to be turned out of the house where God is resident? Psal. 27. 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the daies of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple. There God unvail-eth himself; these are to be denied this one thing that David desired: there are choice manifestations of God there, and these may not hope to enjoy them whilst in an Excommunicate estate. Again in Isa. 25. 6. God promiseth that in this Mountain he will make a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees: of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. These are to be turned out from this feast of fat things, Psalm 36. 7. 8. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleasures. Nay, David found that all his springs were in the Church, Psalm 87. 7. All his joys, and enlargements he got them in the Church. How sad is it to have these springs so dammed up, that that we cannot enjoy them? Nay, to the Church is committed the Covenants, Rom. 9. 4. and the Seals of the Covenant too; you cannot singly have the Seals of the Covenant; but as joyned with the people of God? What a sad thing is it to be put in such a condition, where one shall not enjoy the benefit of the Covenant.**

3. Gods people inchurched have the Image of God shining upon them: they have or should have choice Graces, which are indeed very delightfull. *Seneca* could say, that the very look of a good man did please him. If the look of a good man did please an heathen, should

should it not please much more a Christian ? and if the look of one good man, What should the look of many ? if one star be glorious, what is a constellation ? It must needs be a sweet thing to be in a Communion with the Lords people, to be in the midst of these beds of spices, *Can. 6.2. My beloved is gone down into his garden, into the beds of Spices to feed in the gardens and to gather lillies* It is as sad to be thrust out of their company from the sight of the graces of the Lords people : the appearance of these Graces, are lost to Excommunicates. Saints in Communion have a mighty advantage by seeing the Conversation of Church-members, to see how they deny themselves, how they trample the world under their feet, to see a company of Believers part from life rather then from a little Command ; this is taken to see their feet stand in an even place, not walking halting y and uncomly, but keeping Judgement and doing Righteousness at all times, *Psal. 106.3. to see their hands filled with both the Tables, having an equal respect to all his commands, these are glorious sights, but such as excommunicates may not enjoy ; for they are to be put away from the midst of them. Examples of imitation or caution are very cogent and taking : they work more on us sometings then Doctrines : we are more prone to be affected with what we see, then what we here. Those that will not be wrought on by Sermons, may by conversations. 1 Pet. 3.1. Likewise ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.* Now what a sad thing is it to be turned out from beholding the Conversations of the Lords people ! this is a dreadful sentence, a little piece or Hell,

4. Saints in Communion are engaged to be faithfull to one anothers souls, in watching over one another, and in reprovng one another. But all this is to be lost to day. These are to lose all this.

Likely they did not much care for it, the more is the pitty. But Mannah is Mannah, though such proud and filthy stomachs nauseate it. God will loose us to day from that particular tie that we were before under to these wretches. My Brethren, have not you found advantages by watching over one anothers quickning one another, counselling one another, and stirring up the Graces of one another ? And when you have come off from one another ; Have you not been more inflamed with love to God, more humbled in your own eyes, more prepared for sufferings, more dis-engaged from the world ? Think then what a loss this is to be deprived of these helps.

Secondly, To be delivered to Satan, is also a further proof of the sharpness of this Rod, and the weight and heaviness of it Though it be hard to tell which is worse : as I told you but now.

The delivery supposeth a Demand, the Devil cometh, and demandeth of God such a Member (she is mine saith the Devil, *m, t* have been a Lier from the Beginning, and such a one is she, she hath learned to lie after me, and therefore give her up. What saith God to us, deliver up such a Lier to Satan? take her devil and torment her, and vex her, put forth some Power on her for the destruction of the flesh: Satan cometh on again; There is another id as this fold that I demand saith he: I demand her that hath removed the bounds in her family in imitation of me: when I was in thy family, I was not contented with my then station: I was not high enough: I would pirck up, and be above; and so hath she since she hath sinned after my likeness, give me that lawless woman and give me all my Children.

O saith God! That you did it: O my Church when convened! Deliver her also to Satan. I have given him leave to molest and disquiet her: do not withhold her, but deliver her O Beloved! Is not this a fearfull Judgement? therefore it is called a curse: It is an *anathema*: Is it not sad for God to curse such a one, and to say, the devil take such an one? remember for the Church to be commanded in the name of Christ to curse such an one, to bid the Devil take such a woman, such a liar, such a contumacious woman; here *vox populi est vox Dei*: to go forth from the Church of Christ with the curse of God and man, how terrible is it? It is like the final sentence, *depart from me, &c.* What If we must depart, let us go into some good place and good company, no, but into the Devils company: but let us be at liberty, no, but chains must be put on: *ye must be bound, Mat. 18. 18.* How terrible is this? Beloved know this of a truth, whom ye this day shall bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven: and those poor souls that shall be under the curse of God to day, shall never be delivered from it without Repentance from these sins of theirs. Look ere as *Godliness hath the promises of this life, and that which is to come*. But so Ungodliness hath the curse of this life, and that which is to come. They are cursed, if they repent not to the day of Christ. *Quis non exhorreat se tradi Satanae summo hosti Dei.* Who would not tremble saith Peter Martyr to be delivered to Satan, the greatest enemy that God hath in the world: to be under the power of a cruel Tyrant, to be a Galli-slave to the Turk, were a great misery; but alas no Magistrate, no Power so cruel and malicious, as Satan is: to lie under such a cruel enemy that hates, the soul, and persons so exceedingly. It cannot but be a very great Affliction.

I speak this that I might bespeak you, and my own soul to pity these poor sorrowing souls. That in putting them under the Power of the Devil, ye may show compassion. You that are servants, do not ye account it a sad thing to be under wicked Masters? David

and reckoneth it amongst other great curses, *set thou a wicked man over
evil, in, that is a curse, Psal. 109. 6.* O what is it then to set a wick-
ed had Devil over a soul ? What is it to have a wicked Spirit
in Goer one ? Nay the *wicked one* as he is called, *1 Joh. 3. 12* ?
I fear my Brethren, that the work we are about to day, though it
resemble such sad work, doth not lie near enough to our hearts ; nay as
ever sad as it is, I fear it maketh some besotted sinners to laugh this
novelty : but surely did these consider the fearful nature of Excommu-
nication, it might turn their laughter into weeping. Whatever
high untearance Excommunicates may have amongst us, yet an excom-
municate person was so odious to the Jews ; that besides that they
mand shut him out of the Synagoue ; if they did but meet such an
one, they looked on it as a special misfortune, as a special token
of some sad tidings, which would befall them. So much was this
leave of the Church revered in those days,
liven *the Jews.* that it was accounted worse then five deaths. Will
before you hear Mr. *Greenham's* Opinion of Excommuni-
cation ; they are among *Zuims* and *Juims*, among the Owls and
demons ; they are as in Hell, and from the Congregation of
curse. To say no more of this : if God saith, take him sailor, if the
such be the Keeper, and a Saint, or another be the Prisoner,
thou may guess how he shall be used : O ! how will he tear and rend
his conscience, &c. But will you say why so fearfull a sentence ?
&c. *What is the end of Excommunication ?* that is the fifth thing.
Fifthly, What doth God intend in all this ? I answer, that this
thing out it is a medicinal punishment ; it is Physick, and it is
the last Physick : God saith now or never, here is the last way,
day this doth not take, fare well. The end (its plain) is medi-
cal, that the flesh may be destroyed, and the Spirit may be
saved in the day of Christ : and here let us take notice, though
there be severity, yet there is mercy mingled with it.
Here is Mercy in this, that God will not have such a course
taken, save when all other helps fail, not till then : and there-
fore he will have us to begin with private admonitions, *Mat. 18.*
not Cover the fault as long as may be ; if yet no audience then
test proceed unto a second or third, untill such time as the party cease
to hear the Church ; untill that day, this sentence is not to
be inflicted. There is Mercy in this, that God delayeth it so long.
Here is mercy in this : it is but in *interitum carnis* : it is but for
the destruction of the flesh, that is the prime end of excommunica-
tion, and then.
He setteth bounds to the Devil : prescribeth it *Diabolo ter-*
ror. *Athan.* he sheweth that Satan is limitted to the flesh,
shall go no further then the flesh : Again.
It is not *malum perpetuum*, sed *ad tempus* ; the end is, that
the

the soul may be saved in the day of Christ : (which last we
(in the day of Christ) you may apply either to the day of death
or the day of Christs appearing :) so that this moderateth the
severity of the sentence, in this, that it doth not put any into a state
wherein they cannot be saved ; we put them rather in a way to be
saved : *Perirent, nisi perirent, 1 Tim. 1. 20.* Therefore were *Hymenæus*
and *Alexander* delivered to Satan, that they might learn not to
blaspheme. And *Paul* boasts of his Authority, *2 Cor. 10. 8.* that *God*
Lord gave it him for edification, and not for destruction : So that
the primary intrinsecal end of the Rod of Excommunication is
the edifying of souls. The wisdom of God hath appointed by this
grief, and sorrow of being put out of Christs Family, to humble the
spirit of him that hath any thing of God, (though secretly) but
in him.

✓ I come now to some Objections to be answered.

Object. 1. *Is not this a very unlikely way to save souls by putting
them out of the care of the Church, and out of the fellowship of the peo-
ple of God ? and especially to put them into the hands of the Devil,
may you not more easily reform a wanton within her fathers house,
by casting her forth into the streets ?*

Answer. But who art thou, O man that disputest against God ?
will you reason against the wisdom of Christ ? You see clearly it is
his will, that he be put away ; and this putting away is the
delivering to Satan : and the express reason is, that the flesh may be
destroyed, and the soul saved. A Medicinal depriving of an offend-
er of the comfortable communion of the Saints is a means, by
which God may humble.

Object. 2. *But what if these persons that we intend to excommunicate
be found godly : is not this dangerous to carry our selves so to
children of God ?*

Answer. This hath been spoken to already ; but yet some will
say, that the Apostle speaketh of the incestuous person, supposing him
godly, that he had not all flesh, but spirit as well as flesh. Yet he
warns that : I pray you consider to prevent stumbling at Excommu-
nication : may not Regenerate persons fall into such grievous sins
as incest and murder ? and then why not for a time into contumacy
against the Church, which deserveth Excommunication. They that com-
mit such sins deserve Excommunication ; but the converted
commit such sins, therefore they may deserve to be Excommunicated,
and they that deserve it should have it. Godly men have
heard admonition : *Asa* was a good man, yet he was so far from
hearing the Prophet, that he claps him up in prison, for being faith-
ful ; Are we to suspend Excommunication on this supposition, that
such an one may be secretly a child of God ? who shall be
Excommunicated ? It being possible that Grace may be in him
without

st we
 F desist him : But to shut up this ; know that the object of
 eth excommunication by Christs appointment , is one that refus-
 o a sith to hear the Church , whether he be converted or not.

ay to Object. 3. But you will say Excommunication in the Text was for
 Hymest, that is a great offence, and you have not such matter against
 n none, that you intend to proceed upon.

that Answ. 1. The first Answer I shall give you here unto is this.
 So though the offence should be in the matter small ; yet that hin-
 is ereth not, but that the Offender should be excommunicated : As
 than said before, so say I still ; and it will be found a truth for ever ;
 able the Reason of Excommunication is not for the first offence only ;
) lyt for contumacy and impenitency joyned with it : so that look
 ; Unbelief is in some sence the only condemning sin ; that is thus,
 whatever sins a man hath committed; if he did but believe, he were
 put off : so whatever offence a man hath committed, if he would
 the fear the first admonition, or the second, or the Churches admoni-
 Deron, he should not be proceeded on, he may not be excommuni-
 se, tited. As Unbelief is the sin that dammeth, so neglecting to hear
 ie Church is the sin that excommunicateth. If a Church-mem-
 ? or was guilty of the highest crime imaginable. Suppose it Sodo-
 ly ity, &c. Yet if he giveth evidence of Repentance, he is not to
 the cast out : and yet if the offence be never so small, if he hears
 be at the Church : and therein Christ; he is to proceeded against. No
 offener did this incestuous person discover sorrows for his sin , but
 s, the Apostle is as urgent for his absolution, as before his Excom-
 munication. 2 Cor. 2 6, 7. sufficient to such a man is this punishment
 which was inflicted of many : so that contrarwise ye ought rather
 to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps, such an one should
 : swallowed up with over-much sorrow : And you shall find that
 ill the Brethren for the Presbyterian Government are of this mind :
 ng hear their great Champion, Mr. Rutherford in his Divine right of
 Yet church-government. p. 226. A Fault may be light, and small in
 omis rise. (mark it light and small) so long as it is private which de-
 sinereth not Excommuaication : but if contumacy shall come to
 acyle fault, (that is, if the party shall neglect private and publique
 admonition) as it is here in its growth, and tendency to scanda-
 d nee many , it is not small. Will ye hear one much unbiassed, Lu-
 uniter himself. Si aliquis Ecclesie Minister, &c. Tom. 2. in Gen. 21. If
 ve be any Officer of the Church should not absolve me, but drive
 fire off from the holy Communion, though the matter of offence
 faire but light, yee I believe I should despair with Iudas, and go and
 hang my self.

o th And we find also, that whoever was three days together from
 ay church without urgent necessity, was to be excommunicated, ac-
 widording to the sixth general Council in Trull. In Constantinople

can so. Do not some think it a small matter to be three or four times absent from the Church-meetings without any cause? But,

2. I answer that all things being considered, the fault of both these delinquent-members will (for ought I see, yet to the contrary) weigh in the scale with the fault of the incestuous person. For though this sin of the *Corinthians* called an unheard of sin, *not named among the Gentiles*; yet sure it is a kind of Hyperbolick expression *not heard*, that is, not very common among the Gentiles, but detested by some of them. There are instances among the Prophane Authors of this sin. *Antiochus* the son of *Demetrius* by his fathers consent matched with his mother. *Law* as *Plutarch*, in the life of *Demetrius* doth observe. So *Demetrius* married his father *Artaxerxes* his wife. There was incest.

The meaning then is, that this sin was abominable to some of the civil heathens: and so we may say of the delinquencies which both these are charged with. I shall speak here a little plainly.

For the one of them. *Mistress S.E.* she is accused among other things for lying more than three times: sufficiently proved. We look a little into this sin, and perhaps we may say of it, it is not named among the Gentiles: sure it was a sin abominated of the heathen. It is said of *Epaminondas* that he abhorred *mendacium cosum*, a jesting lie, though he was an Heathen; So that the Apostles aggravation will fall on this sin also. It is a fault that is not named among the heathen: that is, it is detestable to some of the heathen. So *Calvin* and *Paræus* open the words. And the *Persians* & *Indians* have a Law, that whoever had been thrice convicted of lying, should on pain of death never speak a word more all his life after.

I beseech you my Brethren, let us not account of sins only according to the esteem of Nations: let us look into the book of God; and see whether lying be a small sin. First God saith expressly, that there is no sin more against godliness, than lying. *63.8. Surely they are my People: How prove you that? I have evidence of it; They are Children that will not lie.* So that lying seemeth to be inconsistent with the relation of Children: this is such a spot as is not in Gods own Children: nay God engageth himself? if you look narrowly to that Scripture) for his people these are the People that will not lie. Secondly it is one of the few things that God abominateth. *Prov. 6.16,17,18,19, These things doth the Lord hate, yea seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An he that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and him that soweth discord among Brethren, &c.* Among these seven things abominated of God, lying is twice repeated: and therefore it is no slight thing. It seemeth to be most abominable. And what though, so

among

amongst us, should account this a little sin : so was Sodom one
 by the Inhabitants of Sodom. Thirdly, though men will rank
 this sin among the lower-form sins, yet it may further appear that
 it doth not, in that dreadful word, *Rev. 21. 8. But the fearful*
and unbelieving, and the abominable, and Murderers, and Whoremongers,
and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the
lake, which burneth with brimstone : which is the second death. Mark it,
 with what sinners are liars coupled ? you couple them with sinners,
 filthy only of vain thoughts, &c. But the Scripture coupleth them
 with Unbelievers, and abominable, with Whoremongers, Murder-
 ers, and Idolaters : view the place again : it is not said all the fear-
 ful, and the murderers, &c. but all liars, and what shall become of
 them ? they must all to the lake ; and may not we turn them out of
 the Church of God, whom God will turn down to Hell ? Fourthly,
 it is safer in some sence to tolerate an *incestuous person*, then a liar
 in a Church : especially such an one as soweth discord, a discontent-
 ed liar, as this woman was. The peace of the Church is not so
 endangered by an unclean wretch, as by a liar, there can be no com-
 munion with such. It is (as one saith) the breaking of all Socie-
 ty : there can be no converse between man and man where this is.
 And what mischief this lying woman hath been likely to do amongst
 us, you are not altogether ignorant.

But to come to the other woman : she hath bin accused for neg-
 lecting fellowship with the people of God, and in that for Cove-
 nant-breaking ; but chiefly hath been dealt with, for that scan-
 dalous carriage of hers in running away from her husband. Though
 some may make this a light sin to, yet this is a sin against the light
 of Nature : and so cometh under the Character the Apostle
 giveth. The Heathen could have taught her otherwise : the
 light of Nature led them to *co-habitation ubi tu Cains, ibi ego Cajo* :
 was a solemn usage in their marriages ; and therefore we may be-
 lieve to give account to others, that this is no slight offence, for the
 Heathen knew by the light of Nature, that as they were to be one
 flesh : so they were to live together. The Scripture saith, *Let the*
wife see that she fears her husband, Eph. 5. 33. But to run from an
 husband, argueth a base esteem of the husband, and to take such a
wild woman for her companion, that had run before ——— some
 of you know how, greatneth her sin, and maketh it the more scan-
 dalous. *Hagar* was culpable in running from her Mistress : but a
 wife much more, in running from her husband.

The Apostle saith of wives, that they must be *keepers at home, and*
obedient to their husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed,
Tit. 2. 5. How much the Name of God suffered (you know in part)
 by her leaving her husband : I am sure I have been hit in the teeth
 with the scandalousness of the fact : the streets of the City have
 rung

run with the disobedience of that wretch, Mistris M. A. by name. I approve of Dr. Taylors Exposition on the last named Scripture, regarding this thing here condemned (saith he) is the affection of gadding at all times; or all hours with disposition of hearing, or telling news, or affaunting with merriment and expensive company, accounting the house a prison. But surely it doth with a witness reprove flying from home, as she did from her home; if they may not gad from home, they may not fly from home. By this she hath stained her self, her profession, her husband, wronged him exceedingly, as if he with such a *Nabal* that none could dwell with him, and therein very much belyeth him. Besides in it she throws up the trust, that God hath put into her hands, of sharing in the government of household affairs; in it she neglected her children, gave an ill president to them, if they were grown up to be capable of infection by so ill example. So that you see the offences of both these, are in this like the incestuous Forsons sin, they are such, as are not named among the *Gentiles*, and are indeed abominable.

Ans. 3. But then thirdly, let us consider the sins of these women, with some circumstances going before and after.

First, For Mistris S. E. I shall give you a little account of her: and it must be this account: that she was burdensome to many within us before she came under Church-admonition; she took liberty, much speaking in the Church for sometime, and being reprov'd by me for it, from that time there was a visible decay of affection to me, as I have much observed, that when I often treated with her, I found her of a troublesome discontented spirit, quarrelling either with that Church in general, or with several members, whom she would impeach, and being told by me it was an irregularity, and admonished to discharge her duties to them, she was offended at me, yet persisted notwithstanding: And I am confident that there is scarce a dear Brother, or Sister, that can bear witness of her faithfulness in her former proving privately; though she so much blazoned abroad, supposed of real infirmities, and I leave it to you to judge whether this was not schismatical.

She was also observed to dislike those persons, as unfit for Church-fellowship, whom the Church approved, and was a great stickler against the Church, for several persons, whom they could not comfortably close with, yea she would seldom discover her liking, or disliking of persons proposed, till the Church had given their definitive sentence. Thus from time to time she was a Bryar in our side. But then when private Admonition was given her by a Brother (as I know two, which was done several times) this we can say that there was hardly any one that came from her, but with a sad heart (so roll'd was her carriage, and so lofty, and her spirit so unamiable.) But when she was under Church-admonition concerning several things; in

names found tripping very much in reference to her tongue, and lying
are, egregiously : so that the whole Church could bear witness against
at all ; And being farther pressed to hear the Church, she refused, and
affair my memory fail not) she said, she would be drawn asunder by
a wild horse rather than come amongst us. And though she had lif-
hood up her right hand to heaven, to walk in fellowship with us, yet
hoath she separated from us, and to this day sought not reconcilia-
self, on, neither hath she expressed Repentance for her sins : but she
e with justified her self in all that she hath done ; instead of confes-
sing her lies, she stands in her justification ; and though she accus-
ed in the Church in general, and particular members thereof falsely,
affair performeth no duty, that according to *Math. 18. 15.* she is bound
in it, of telling it between him and thee, in order to the making any
So to us sensible of a (supposed) sin.

For Mistress *M. A.* Her coming amongst us is somewhat observa-
and ; Before such time, as we were a Church, we had a meeting of
Christians, wherein none were admitted, but those that gave an ac-
count of the grounds of their hope ; at length Mistress *A.* proposed
her self to this Society, and spake very confidently of her condi-
tion : on a sudden she was (as some observed) stopt in her speech ;
having a little before spoken much of her assurance, yet discovered
very much ignorance, that I believe not one person was satisfied with
her state, which she spake as her experience ; therefore she was denied.
Some time after the Church was constituted, she desired
fellowship ; And then came in with so much difficulty,
that (as I am credibly informed, for I was then absent.) Mr. *Stone-*
field, the then Teacher of this Church, hinted to her to this purpose,
that the Church had stretched to the utmost line of Charity in or-
der to her Reception ; and therefore advised her that her future de-
ceitfulness might be such, as might give better satisfaction concerning
her for the future, than they had for the present. Since when, though
she did engage to fellowship with us : I think this I may say, there
is not a Brother, or Sister here, that can bear witness of her per-
forming any Church-duty to them, of admonition, exhortation, or
murderproof ; and if any of you can witness for her in these things, I
will charge you to discover it ; I speak this, because if she hereafter
bring dirt in this, or that, or the other persons face by Reports, you
may look on such things as slanders, or on her as a Covenant-brea-
ker in not observing the Rule of Christ. A considerable time after
this there happened to be some heats, heats did I say, yea a flame
was kindled in her spirit, against a sister in law of hers, who is in
communion with us. The business grew to that height, that the
moderators were necessitated to examine it : At that time I came enga-
ged to her as the party innocent, rather than the other ; but when
things were examined, I found she had wronged her sister exceed-
ingly,

ingly, by defaming her in the *Eastern* parts amongst her Relations as well as among several members here, and never discharged duty towards her. She carried her self so dis-ingeniously, that I hardly charity for her at that time to judge her gracious; For would endure no council, no admonition, though tendered with bowels: And though her sister was many waies the wronged son, and begged her with tears not to go off in a passion, yet she went in a disdainful way. After long pressing her to confess wronging of her sister: at length, it seemed, she did go to her some outside way, she did somewhat that looked like Repentance or that we would feign one as a retraction. But it seemeth that day she had rankour in her spirit against me; for she hath felt since; that the reason why she would not speak with me, though desired by me, was, because I was unfaithful in that business: if I were unfaithful in that business, ever let me be so unfaithful; if I were unfaithful, it was in not reproving her more cuttingly. My words were too soft I fear. However she patcheth up a peace with her sister, and skinneth over the wound; But within a little after, she carrieth her self frowardly, not only to her Sister, but to all the Brethren that had discourse with her about her miscarriage and particularly about her neglecting Church-fellowship (which was too apparent) and her discontent grew to that height, that she grew angry with her own husband, and in her passion ran from home which being so scandalous, the Church thought themselves obliged to admonish her of that, and other sins, but she breaketh forth in passionate speeches, defaming the Church, and despising their Counsel, refusing from that day to this to hear the Church, and perswading her husband to an undue, and unjust separation from us. She is contented to be a Covenant-breaker her self, but would have others break the Oath of God under which they lie.

Give me leave yet further to aggravate the sin of both these parties in a comparison with the *incestuous person*: First, in all likelihood the *incestuous person* had never been reprov'd for this sin of his, as may be infer'd from *ver. 2*. They did not *mourn over him*, so have these; these have been admonished privately, and are likely.

Secondly, When the *incestuous person* was put away, the next we hear of him is his Repentance, but these, since their suspension which is a kind of Excommunication, yet have shewed no Repentance; instead of sorrowing they rejoyce, and think themselves worthy to be cried up, and to sit in the highest places of the Synagogue, for their stout carriage towards a poor Church of Christ.

Thirdly, We do not find that the *incestuous person* jeered at the Sentence of excommunication, but so do these: Here I cannot take notice of one thing; after such time as *Gannicle* was thus

to utter destruction : therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people ? How many appointed by God to the sword of Excommunication are there, yet let alone every where ? Mr. *Rutherford* in his *Divine Right of Church-government*, pag. 520, saith, that they are co-partners with the wicked, who dispence the bread to them who are knowingly dead in sins. Wo to them that say they are intrusted with the keyes of Heaven, and yet open the door wide to them whom God would have to be kept from his holy Hill ; and do not exclude them from communion, whom God would have to be put away from the midst of them : what can men say, why they do not difference the precious from the vile out of the Pulpit, as well as in the Pulpit ? they are affraid to offer in the Pulpit mercy to the wicked and impenitent ; but why do they give the Seals of mercy and forgiveness to them, that are walking openly in the way to destruction ? It is a terrible word, that in *Ezek. 13. 19.* *And will ye pollute me among my people for handfulls of Barley, and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies ? To save them that should die how sad is this ? How then dare men say, this is the blood of the Covenant shed for the Remission of your sins ? Drink ye all of it ? How can men say this to a company of loose persons, and disorderly walkers ? How can the mother be guiltless of the death of her child, that giveth him poison with this caution, that she telleth him it is poison : so do many Ministers ; they tell men of the danger of unworthy Receiving ; crying, take heed you come not to the table of the Lord, it is pison ; and yet give the Bread to them. Men fondly relieve themselves with a charge they give their people, that they come not unpreparedly to the Lords table : But alas ! — they plead for more then a Doctrinal power that they have to bar the wicked from holy things by Excommunication, and yet improve it not.*

Object. But it is pleaded, that they suspend from the Sacrament.

Ans. I think they are hardly agreed on that point to this day, whether there be such a censure as suspension appointed by Christ, and many of them confess that they use suspension as a prudential, to comply with their Brethren, rather then as an Instituted Ordinance. But truly this is to be for a lamentation, that such an indisputable Ordinance, as Excommunication should be laid aside, and a Prudential shall serve turn. How doth this Intrench on Christs wisdom in appointing this Rod in his house, when it shall not be used from one year to another, though the miscarriages of many calls for it : Sad is it that prudential Remedies shall excommunicate the censure of Excommunication : this is to be matter of lamentation.

Object. But they would say, they would Excommunicate, but they want the Magistrates power.

Ans. I shall give in the Answers of two men of Renown to this. First, Mr. *Rutherford*, he saith, who gave the keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven to the Magistrates? It is confest, if there were no Christian Magistrates, the Church might Excommunicate; and shall the Magistrate, because he is a Christian, spoil the Church of the power she had; when she wanted a Magistrate?

But then hear Mr. *Baxter* in his *Gildas Salvianus*, or Reformed Pastor. I shall give you his words. pag. 214. *How many Ministers in England be there that know not their own charge! that never cast out one obstinate sinner! no nor brought one to publick confession, and expression of repentance, and promise of Reformation? No nor admonished one publicly to call him to such Repentance? May not we lament it in Exon? The great out-cryers against Separation (say I) pretend that all within the compalls of their Parishes are Church-members. And yet for many years together they neglect Church-censures, saith Mr. Baxter, hear him again, pag. 222. We are sent, as Christs Embassadors to speak in his Name, and not in the Princes, and by his Authority we do our work, as from him we have our Commission. The same power that you have to preach without or against the Magistrates command, the same have you to exercise Pastoral Guidance and Discipline without it, &c. And again, pag. 226. The Magistrate fineth and imprisoneth: that is his part: It is your part to bring them to open Repentance; or to cast them out: Doth not the Magistracy of England punish ten, twenty, what if I say an hundred Swearers, Drunkards, or Sabbath-breakers by the sword, for one that the Elders of the Church do punish by censures, or bring to publick repentance for the satisfaction of the Church. And again, pag. 227. What had the Church of Christ done till the daies of Constantine the great: if it had no better Pastors then you, that will not govern it without the joint compulsion of the Magistrate? Discipline, and severe Discipline was exercised for three hundred years together, where the Prince did not give them so much as a Protection, nor Toleration, but persecuted them to the death. And again, pag. 228, Are the keyes of Christs Kingdom so useles that they will not open, and shut without the help of the sword? If they have contracted any rust, by which they are made les fit for service, next to the Prelates, we may thank our selves, that let them lie so long unused. In pag. 232. Mr. Baxter raiseth an Objection, that we are but single Pastors, and therefore cannot excommunicate men alone, he answereth to this largely, and amongst other things, thus:*

Have you none in your Parish, not one or two to make ruling Elders of, that by their conjunction you may be authorized to do more then now you do? I mean according to your own principles. And what hindereth but you may join together if you will? If it must needs be many Pastors conjunct, that must exercise any act of Discipline, why is it so done? Doth any forbid them? It is a reproachful charge upon all the

the Ministers in the Country, to say, that Discipline is cast aside, because they can get none to join with them in the execution. Remember this day and remember often the danger that cometh to Ministers, and people where the leaven is not cast out. And let this be for a lamentation.

Use 2. The second Use is of caution several ways.

First, Caution to them that yet have not joined themselves to any particular Church, let them beware how they join themselves to any Church, where Discipline is neglected. The leaven of wickedness, is leaven to this day. There is as great danger in wicked company now, as ever there was: if so be, you may join with visibly unleavened Societies, beware how ye join with others, lest after you thank yourselves for all the pollution and misery you contract, by joining your selves to undisciplined Congregations.

Secondly, Let it be a caution to you my Brethren, and to others, not to be offended at a Church, in case some prove rotten and unsound. The Apostle tels us, 1st Cor. 11.19. *There must be Heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you.* If there were none, what would become of the Rod? The rod is made for the back of Offenders. Be not offended at *Corinth*, though there be found an incestuous person there: nor at us, though a Liar and Covenant-breaker be amongst us: they are to be cast out. Be offended at us rather, when we neglect Church-Discipline.

Use 3. The third Use is of information. This informeth us, what a wise God we have to deal with, who can make the most unlikely means serviceable to his ends; who can make Satan do his own work. That is to be considered to day. A man would think that such a censure should totally and finally harden a sinner. It would so, if God did not otherwise dispose of it, if it were not Christs institution. Oh, How is carnal reason here *non-plust*! My own reason tels me, that this days meeting (not considering it as an institution) will harden these wretches more: But when I remember an institution of Christ, when I remember that God would have the Church convened, and that to deliver to Satan for the destruction of the flesh: It giveth me some hopes, when I remember that God did make the earth to help the woman, *Rev. 12.16.* Why may he not here make the Serpent the Devil, to help the woman. This is admirable, that the flesh must be destroyed, and Satan must have an hand in it: What strange tools can God work with?

Use 4. The fourth and the last se is of Exhortation to the Church of God to four things.

First, Boast not over the fallen. It is by Grace that thou standest. If God let thee alone before the setting of the Sun, thou wilt turn thy back as much on Christ and his people, as these have done; thou wilt contemn Christs institutions if let alone, and ne-

left private and publique Admonition, as much as these : thou wilt dispise the Church in thy heart and tongue, as much as these. When the Gentiles were in the olive tree, in the Church, *Rom. 11.* And the Jew cut off. The Apostle was jealous that this priviledge would swell the Gentiles into great thoughts of themselves, and into a contempt of the Jews : and therefore he cautioneth them, *ver. 18.* *Boast not against the Branches,* that is, against the Branches that are broken off. If God let thee alone, thou wilt be the fourth person that will be thrown out of this house of God.

Secondly, Boast not of thy self too much. Perhaps thou vauntest that thou hast kept thy self within compass ; But art not thou guilty of such wickedness. That had the Brethren been faithful to thy soul, thou mightest also have come under censure this day : or perhaps thou delightest in contemplative wickedness, and art but a painted wall, a guilded post, a very Formalist, full of envy pride, &c. Know this.

1. That Satan will be contented to have the inward Rooms, if he cannot possess the whole house. Thou art as safely the Devils by indulging to a secret sin, as if thou wert guilty of an open scandalous evil : nay in some sense in a far worse condition ; for if thy wickedness did break forth, thou mightest enjoy this sharp priviledge of Excommuication, (whose end is for the destruction of the flesh, *that the Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord,*) which now, because thy sin is secret, thou canst not enjoy. It is true, the Excommunicates are put under the power of Satan judicially, but thou art under his Power already, thou maist fear, thou art delivered to Satan morally, to be hardened : but these are to be delivered, though judicially ; yet medicinally also to be humbled, shamed and softned, *that the Spirit may be saved.* Again.

2. Thou that boastest, that thou carriest things cleverly, know that there is a doctrinal Excommunication, that many Church-members may be under, many more then we can possibly beware of. When your Ministers declare from Gods word, that *Hypocrites shall not inherit heaven,* &c. That Word of God hath Authority enough to bind you over to the day of Christ, unless you repent.

3. Know this, that God may detect you before you die, and likely he will, and therefore boast not of your secrecie in sinning, your paint may fall off : the stake in the hedge, though at the first it looketh green, yet after a while, it will wither, and shew it self to be but a stake, and not a living Branch.

Cain was at first a Sacrificer, and yet at length cast out, cast out of the sight of the Lord, out of his fathers family, from the Ordinances, &c. God will not always suffer you to abuse his own patience and the good opinion of Beholders, and the place of your standing

in the Church of God. A dead oak may be left alone in a Wood, but a dead vine may not be let alone in a Vineyard.

Thirdly, Through this cloud, Labor what ye can to shine the brighter, let me bespeak you in the words of the Apostle, Phil. 2. 14, 15, 16. *Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless; the Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, among whom ye shine as Lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.* I beseech you repair Gods honour and the Churches what you may, by shining the brigher, and amongst other ways this is one, let it be in those Graces that are most opposite to the sins of the Excommunicates, to those sins you are come, to witness against this day: You have thrown out one already for his Heretical Principles, and not hearing the Church; Do you cover the more to be found in the Faith, and to be stedfast and unmoveable in a form of wholesome words: And for this end, I cannot but commend your purpose of subscribing a profession of faith this day. So for these that are to be thrown out this day, the more lying one hath been guilty of; the more do you speak truth one to another,; and let there not be a lying tongue in the midst of us: and the more another is found disobedient, I beseech you labour the more to keep your bounds at home, as also in this Church of Christ; and here also I cannot but approve of your purpose to subscribe a Covenant that will be a fence against a lawless Spirit.

Fourthly, Let me beseech you to love Heaven the better for this day, and the sad occasion of it. Here we see, that notwithstanding all our Covenants and Engagements; yet we are a mixed people: the Leaven is amongst us to this day." Let us take a view of Heaven, when putting some on the borders of hell, In Heaven there are no mixtures, there are none Leavened, there are none that cause division; there they are all of one heart, and of one peace. Let this provoke us to long for Heaven: Here is lying and deceitfulness, fickleness and levity: but in Heaven there is no such inconstant and scandalous company: there are all faithfull friends, a faithfull Father, a faithfull Christ, a faithfull Spirit, faithfull Angels, all faithfull friends. Here ever and anon we have the Briar and the Thorn (such the earth brought forth ever since the fall) here the *Canaanite* and the *Perizite* are amongst us; but in Heaven no Briar groweth. let us be invited to love heaven the better.

The Church is compared to the Kingdom of Heaven, and it should be so here, into which no unclean thing should enter; but yet it is not so in this lower Heaven, in this house of God,

Here are vessels of dishonour that appear so, and here vessels get rust, and the very appointing excommunication speaketh what God saw his Church would need. But Excommunication is no more appointed for Heaven above, since the Angelss were thence cast out.

The end of the Sermon which was delivered before the Persons were Excommunicated.

After



After the persons were Excommunicated : there were given these following Reasons, why a Church of Christ should then renew their Covenant with God, why any of the members thereof are justly Excommunicated.

Reason 1.



He excommunicating of obstinate, and impenitent members, is the purging out of filth, which was got within such a Church : this is implied in that excommunication is commanded, 1 Cor. 5. 7. under the Metaphor of purging : *Purge out therefore the old leaven ; and if we peruse the Records of Scripture, we shall find, that whensoever any filth was brought into the house of God, by sinful remissness in the people of God, they did not satisfie themselves with throwing out the filth, but solemnly renewed their Covenant. Thus they did in Asa's time : a prophet cometh, and telleth Asa that how they were defiled, when Asa heard those words, Hebr. Abominations. Asa took courage and put away the abominations, the idols out of the Land, but what ? was that all ? No, And they entred into a covenant, 2 Chron. 15. 8. and vers. 12. Commanded : they did both put away the Abominations that were among them, and they did bind themselves more firmly to all duties of piety towards God, comprized under the phrase of seeking the Lord ; so in Hezekiah's days, he commanded the Levites to carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place, but that is not all, he would have them enter into Covenant with God again, as appears by comparing the fifth & the sixth vers. of the 29. chapt. of the second book of Chron. Thus in Nehemiah's time, after they had been mixt with strangers : the seed of the land, such as were truly Israelites, that did*

** Under this word filthiness is comprized, what ever was brought into the Temple to pollute the true worship of God. Larg. Anor. in loc.*

not disgrace Israel, from whom they descended, they put away all strangers, *Neh. 9.2.* and also renewed * their Covenant *ver. 38.* Because of all this we make a sure Covenant.

* *Heb. Fidelity or sureness, or a sure thing to note,* (saith Mr. Caril) *that a well grounded Covenant is a sure, and firm, and irrevocable aff.*

Reason 2.

ברית אלהים *Ele- git, quia eliguntur personae inter quas & res & conditiones propter quas, fœdus initur* Buxtorf.

Totum populum Israelis in a probabo, & recognoscam, ut Pastor gregem ad recipiendos in fœdus & causam meam bonas: improbosq; abdicandos. Jun. in loc. Thus Polanus also, and the large Anotat. expounds this place.

Covenant, *Nehem. 10.28.* They had not only knowledge and understanding, but they had separated themselves from the people of the lands, unto the law of God: they had purged out filth from among them. Such a Church before the Rebels are purged out from among them, is not so qualified for covenanting with the Lord.

Reason 3.

It is no small affliction to such a Church, that there is need of the dreadfull Censure of Excommunication to be inflicted on any of its members; it cannot but be a time of trouble to the whole Church, when any of its members are cut off by Excommunication: it cannot but be as great a trouble as it is to our natural bodies, when a finger, or a toe, or an arm, or a leg are cut off.

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Such time therefore is seasonable for such work. I will cause you
 faith the Lord, to pass under the Rod, and so I will bring you in.
 the bond of the Covenant, *Ezek. 20. 37.*

This was one cause of that Covenant in *Nehemiah's* days. We are in great distress, *Neh. 9. 37.* And because of all this we make a sure
 Covenant, *vers. 38.*

*Pios sub virgam
 transmittit Deus, ut
 ad fideris exhibiti-
 onem eos inducat
 quum velit eos sui*

juris esse, & pro arbitrio carnis vivere. Polon. in loc.

Reason. 4.

Excommunication of Incorrigible members ought to be joined
 with fasting, *1 Cor. 5. 2.* the Apostle blameth
 the Corinthian Church, because they had not
 mourned, * that he that had done that deed,
 might be taken away from among them; and
 the proper business, of a fasting day, is entering
 into, or renewing Covenant with God: the
 Covenant in *Nehemiah's* time, came in the close
 of a fasting day, as appears, *Nehem. 9. 1, 38.*
 compared.

** נעשה refers to
 the stile of mourn-
 ers, and denotes the
 solemnity usuall
 among the Jews, of
 putting on mourn-
 ing habits, and wail-
 ing over them that*

were Excommunicated. *Leigh. in loc. When there was Excommunica-
 tion, they did anciently fast. Trap. in loc.*

Reason 5.

At such a time Satan hath faster hold of some, that were of such
 a Church: and therefore at such a time God should have faster
 hold of such a Church. Such as are Excommunicated, they are (as
 hath been told you) delivered to Satan, *1 Cor. 5. 5.* * And therefore such a Church should de-
 liver up themselves A fresh to God; such poor
 wretches are given up to Judicial hardness, so
 that they are sorry for nothing so much, but
 that they with such a Church entered into Co-
 venant with God; they have retracted and re-
 canted what formerly they did: and therefore
 such a Church to manifest that they are still
 of the same mind, and that they do not repent
 of what they have done, should renew their
 Covenant. Such wretches they have renewed
 their Covenant with Hell, and Satan, and
 therefore such a Church should renew their
 Covenant with God.

** Hoc illud est,
 quod Christus dicit,
 fieri sicut ethnicum,
 sive publicanum,
 Matth. 18. 17. Sla-
 ter in loc. So Be-
 za, Calvin, Paræus,
 Alapide, Estius,
 Morton, Leigh.
 large Annot. and the
 Dutch Annot. inter-
 pret this place.*

Reason 6.

Reason 6..

At such a time such a Church seeth sad instances of its proneness to backslide from God, and what they should do, if God should leave them to themselves : and a Covenant is a Golden Girdle to tie

** Let us glue our selves to the Lord ; so some : let us bind our selves to the Lord, not only as the borrower doth himself to the usurer for a time ; but as the wife doth her self to her husband, for ever, saith Dr. Burges in his Sermon before the Parliam. on those words.*

fast to God ; it is a joyning our selves to the Lord, Jer. 50. 5. * Seeing therefore such a Church seeth at such a time in a more especial manner their proneness to suffer this Golden Girdle to loosen, and untie, to dis-join and unglue themselves from God : therefore it is very seasonable for such a Church at such a time to enter into bond again unto the Lord, to tie this Golden Girdle yet faster : to glue themselves once more to the Lord, that so God and they may never part. One main end of Covenanting is to prevent starting aside from God. For this end blessed Hooper was willing to be tied to the stake, because he was flesh as well as spirit.

Reason 7.

At such a time Satan will be tempting and assaulting others of such a Church: when Satan and the world have got any to Apostatize, and to depart from God and his ways ; they are encouraged and set upon more, to endeavour the seducing of more of the Members of such a Church : Now there is no such way to prevent Satans doing as sign, as for such a Church to renew their Covenant ; therefore woe

** Or as the Greek and Caldie explain it, that there be not, &c. Ayns. in loc.*

Israel to renew their Covenant, lest there should be among them any, whose heart turneth away from the Lord

** Deut. 29. 10, 12, 18.*

Reason 8.

It is a very choice Mercy to have filth purged out of Church of Christ, though by excommunicating some of its members, in Ezek. 20. 38. Its promised as no small mercy that God would

The Doctrine that Dr. Burges in the

purge out from among his people the Rebels and such as transgress against God. The first Par. Sermon, raiseth from Jer. 50. 5. is this, when God vouchsafeth any deliverance to his Church, especially from Babilon, then it is most seasonable and necessary to close with God by a more solemn, strict and inviolable Covenant, to be his, and only his for ever. See it largely proposed through the Sermon.

might further appear by the motives, whereby the Apostle Paul
 reflecteth the Church of *Corinth* to excommunicate the incestuous *Co-*
rubian, 1 *Cor.* 5. 6. 7. now this is the use that Gods People should
 take of any choice mercy, thereby to engage themselves more close-
 ly to God; this is the motive that *Moses* urgeth to perswade the *Is-*
raelites to enter into a special Covenant with God, beside the solemn
 Covenant which he made with them (and they with him) in *Ho-*
sh. *Deut.* 29. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.

Reason 9.

At such a time, such a Church stands in more then ordina-
 ry need of Gods renewing his Covenant with them, to have God
 faster bound unto them: And then God is in a special manner,
 willing thereunto, see this most evidently demonstrated in *Jer.* 32.
 from v. 37. to the 42. v. & 2 *Cor.* 6. 17, 18. it is but reasonable therefore
 that such a Church should then be willing to renew their Covenant
 with God, and thereby bind themselves faster unto his Majesty.

Reason 10.

This is the likeliest means to enable and incline such a
 Church, to purge out what filth may remain in the midst of them,
 and to keep more filth from getting within such a Church for the
 future. God hath promised that he will purge out from such a peo-
 ple as renew their Covenant with him all the Rebels, *Ezek.* 20. 38.
 and he hath promised to establish such a Church for a People to
 himself. *Deut.* 29. 12, 13, besides hereby such a Church, such a peo-
 ple are more engaged to purge out all the remaining leaven, and to
 keep out the uncircumcised, and the Philistine from entering with-
 in the gates of Zion, and so are likly to become, and to be pre-
 served a new lump, as they are unleavened: it is very war-
 rantable therefore for us this day, to take up their words in *Nehe.*
 9. 38.

Because

for. ~~for~~ his book
and give him grass her in to look but
to land but find that learning is better
the house and land where house and
many is given her for

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Because of all this, we make a sure Covenant,
and write it.



Believe that there is one only God in three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; Infinite in Being, Wisdom, Goodness and Power : The Maker, Preserver and Disposer of all things, and the most just and mercifull Lord of All.

Believe that Mankind, being fallen by his sin from God and Happines, under the wrath of God, the curse of his Law, and the power of the Devil : God so loved the world that he gave his only Son to be their Redeemer, who being God, and one with the Father, did take to him our Nature, and became man, being conceived of the Holy Ghost in the Virgin *Mary*, and born of her, and named JESUS CHRIST : and having lived on Earth without sin, and wrought many Miracles : for a witness of his Truth he gave up himself a Sacrifice for our sins, and a Ransom for us, in suffering death upon the Crois, & being buried, he rose again the third day, and afterward ascended into Heaven, where he is Lord of All, in Glory with the Father : and having ordained, that All that truly repent and believe in him, and love him above all things, and sincerely obey him, and that to the death
shal

shall be saved, and they that will not, shall be damned and commanded his Ministers to preach the Gospel to the world : he will come again, and raise the bodies of all men from death, and will set all the world before him to be judged, according to what they have done in the body ; and he will adjudge the Righteous to Everlasting, and the rest to Everlasting punishment which shall be execute accordingly.

I Believe that God the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, was sent from the Father and the Son to inspire and guide the Prophets and Apostles that they might fully reveal the Doctrine of Christ, and by multitudes of evident Miracles and wonderfull Gifts to be the great witness of Christ, and of the truth of his Holy Word, and to dwell and work in all that are drawn to believe, that being first joined to Christ, the Head, and into one Church, which is his body, are so pardoned, and made the sons of God, they may be peculiar People, sanctified to Christ, and may mortify the flesh, and overcome the world and the Devil, and being zealous of good works, may serve God in Holiness and Righteousness, and may live in the special Love and Communion of the Saints, and in hope of Christs coming and of Everlasting Life.

I DO heartily take this one God in the Trinity of persons, for my only God and my chief good, and this **JESUS CHRIST** for my only Lord, Redeemer and Saviour, and the Holy Ghost for my Sanctifier, and the Doctrine by him revealed, and sealed by his Miracles and now contained in the holy Scriptures. I do take for the Law of God, and the Rule of my Faith and Life, and repenting unfeignedly of my sins : I do resolve through

through the Grace of God, sincerely to obey him; both in Holiness to God, and Righteousness to men; and in special Love to the Saints, and Communion with them, against all the Temptations of the Devil, the World, and my own flesh, and this to the death.

I DO consent to be a Member of the particular Church of Christ at *Exon*, whereof *Mr. Lewis Dingley* is Pastor and Over-seer: and to submit to his teaching and Ministerial Guidance. And to the over-sight of Mr. *N. E.* Mr. *F. R.* Mr. *I. W.* Mr. *T. A.* Ruling according to Gods word, and to hold Communion with this Church in the publique worshipping of God, and in the strength of Christ, to perform all the Duties of a Church-member, to the members thereof, that so we may be built up in Knowledge and Holiness; and may the better maintain our Obedience unto Christ, and the Welfare of this Society, and hereby may the more please and glorifie God.

*To this subscribed the several Members
of the Church.*

D

WE

WE whose Names are under written
do Assent to the same Principles of
Christian Religion, and Consent to
the same Terms of the Covenant of Grace, and
do engage in the strength of Christ, to perform
the several Duties of our Respective Of-
fices to the several Members of this Church
and that we will not infringe the liberties, which
Jesus Christ hath given thereunto.

To this subscribed the Pastor,
and the four Elders.

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om by Reason of the Agreement that is between
this Profession, and the Profession of several
Churches of Christ in Worcestershire: I shall in
the next place transcribe out of Mr. Baxters Chri-
stian Concord, some Observations of his, concerning
that Profession of theirs.

IN his Explication of some passages in the profession,
he tells us, p. 17. &c. For the Profession it self un-
derstand, that we distinguish betwixt that which
makes a man a Member of the Universal
Church (which must go first) and that which makes
or declares a man to be a member, of a particu-
lar Church. And therefore we have first put
down so much as is necessary to the former (Largely, as
being of weight) and then put down that which is necessa-
ry to the latter (Briefly,) Again, That faith which eve-
ry Christian must have and profess, consisteth, first, in the assent
of his understanding to the truth of Fundamentals. Secondly,
and in the consent of his Will; first, to the Relations between
God and him. 2. And the Benefits following those Relations,
which both are offered. 3. And to the duties commanded on the
ground of those relations. 4. Especially those duties which are made
by God, the condition of our receiving the said relations or bene-
fits, and so are of flat necessity thereto. Now in the Apostles creed,
(commonly so called) both these are implied in the phrase of (be-
lieving in) but because the great stop now is in mens wils for sub-
mitting to the practise of professed truths, therefore we have
thought it necessary (having so much Scripture-warrant) to
require distinctly a more express profession. 1. Of Assent to the

Truth. 2. Of the foresaid Consent, the Expressness being no way inconvenient, but in our Judgements very needfull.

Again understand, That for the former part, the profession of Assent to the Fundamentals, we do make use of the common Creed, called the Apostles, as our ground and text, and we superadd our own by way of Comment, or exposition, &c.

Afterward, p. 20. we thought it necessary (saith he) to reduce all the Fundamentals or Articles of the Creed to three heads, viz. The Father, Son and holy Ghost, and their relations and works, because Christ himself in the baptismal institution compriseth all in these three, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. And many learned men think that the Churches common Creed was no larger at first (as *Parker de de-sensu* at large endeavours to prove: And *Lud. Crocius Synag.* &c.) or at least, that thence it had its rise. As for the sence of some few of the terms that may possibly be mis-understood. I shall saith he, p. 21, 22, &c.) give you my own thoughts, &c. For the first part in mentioning Gods Being, (which we put first) and his primary attributes, we apply the word *Infinite* to them all, and by the Infiniteness of his Being, we mean his Eternity and Immenity: (that he is not a Body, but a Spirit nor visible, palpable, &c. as bodies are, we imply, or rather express in the very term (God) by his infinite Wisdom, we mean his perfect knowledge of himself, and all things intelligible, past, present, or to come, their causes, manners, ends, circumstances, &c. and how all things should be ordered and disposed of for the best. By his infinite goodness we mean all the perfection of his Holiness. Inclination (if I may so speak) to do good to his Creatures; and in a word, whatsoever is in God, which we may conceive of in Analogie to moral virtues in man which lie in the perfection of his Will, (as by infiniteness of his Wisdom, we mean all his intellectual perfections) by the Infinite power of God: we mean his Omnipotency, and all the perfections of that in God, which bears Analogie with the executive vertue in man: for as in describing the perfections of man, we must first express his Being, as the Foundation, and then reduce all his principal vertues to the perfection of his Intellect, Will, and executive Power: so must we be forced for our weak apprehensions to do by the incomprehensible God, while we can know him but in this Glass. Next, We thought meet to mention his principal Works and relations thereupon. 1. As to all the Creatures of whom he is. 1. The Maker. 2. Preserver. 3. Disposer. 2. As to the rational creature in particular, of whom he is the Lord, which term we use in the Scripture-sence, as it comprehendeth both his absolute propriety in us, and his absolute Sovereign Rector-ship over us all: to which relations of his it is, that his perfect Justice is to be subjoined, and his Mercy as to the most eminent exercise

being of it: God must be considered as Rector, before he is considered as a most just and mercifull Rector.

In the second part we thought meet, first to express the disease, and then the Remedy: the first lay in sin, the cause and its effects, which as to our loss is, in falling from God and Happiness (our true God) and the state to which we fell, is that three-fold misery, Gods wrath, the curse of the Law; and the Power of Satan, though God hath not wrath, as man hath: yet there is some cause of our sufferings in God, which man can have no better conceiving or expression of, then under the notion of wrath: and therefore we must do as Scripture doth, in distinguishing between Gods wrath, and the effects of it, and not make them all one. When we say, man is fallen under the power of the Devil, we include the power of sin, and of the flesh, and of the world, for these are but Satans Materials, Baits or Instruments. A double power of Satan we mean: both as he is the cause of sin, and as he is the cause of punishment: and therefore is said to have the power of death, Heb. 2. 14. 2. The Remedy of this Malady we have described in its several causes and parts, which I will leave to your observation, by the word (*ordained*): we have no respect to eternal decrees *de rerum eventu*: but to Christ Legislation, which is in order to be placed before Judgement, and its execution, which are next subjoined, &c.

In the third part, we thought it meet to be larger on the belief of the Holy Ghost, then other Creeds are: for doubtless, as it is not only the Essence, and person of the father, and the Son that are to be believed, but also the relation and works of the Father, as Creator, and of the Son as Redeemer: so is it the relation and works of the Holy Ghost also that must be believed to Salvation. And if the sin against the holy Ghost be so desperate, doubtless belief in the holy Ghost is as necessary: and indeed I fear most Christians do not understand or consider well this part of their Creed, what it is to believe in the Holy Ghost. I think the ancient Creed cited from Tertullian, expresseth it excellently (*Misisse vicariam vim spiritus sancti qui credentes agat*) it is likely God would have kept the Mystery of the Trinity unknown to us, and never have made it the object of our Faith, if the several persons had not stood in those relations to us, and done those works for us that must needs be known: I think Tertullians terms are an exact interpretation of the work (*Paraclete*) it is called *vim vicariam*, because Christ being personally in Heaven, hath sent the Holy Ghost to do the rest of his work on earth, and carry on his cause, and maintain his interest till return against the World, flesh and Devil, which is to be Christs Advocate, or properly his Agent (*qui credentes agat*) and that is two ways, that he actuateth Believers: First extraordinarily

narly, by inspiring the Prophets and Apostles, and causing them to work Miracles, and speak with tongues, &c. And doubtless this is a most principal part of our belief in the Holy Ghost, viz. To believe that the Spirit which spake by the Apostles, And by which, Believers did speak with tongues, and work Miracles, was the very Spirit of God, even the Holy Ghost, and not an evil deceiving Spirit (which they that affirm, blaspheme the Holy Ghost) And consequently that the many glorious works, and gifts of this Spirit are an infallible seal to the Truth of the Testimony and Doctrine of Christ. For you must note the order of each part of your Creed. The Father is to be believed in as the first cause and end of man, and as his happiness. The Son is to be believed in as the only way to the Father, to recover man to his favour, and to the happiness which he hath lost. The Holy Ghost is to be believed in as the eminent principal way to the Son, by inspiring the Prophets to foretell him, but specially by the wonderfull gifts and frequent evident and uncontroled Miracles, which were wrought by the Disciples, and also by animating and sanctifying his People. This is Christs last and great witness which must convince the world, or else they shall have no greater to convince them. Secondly, And the Holy Ghost must also be believed in, in regard of his more ordinary actuating of Believers, and that is as our Guide, Illuminator, Sanctifier, and assister against our spiritual enemies in our conflicts; and Comforter in our distresses : in mentioning the Spirits in-dwelling, and working (which because they are more undoubted; Scripture terms we put instead of *Tertullians qui redentes agit*) we make Believers the subject, because though faith itself be the gift of God, yet there is so much greater, and more eminent Grace given after faith, and on condition of believing, then the Grace is which enableth us to believe, that it is only the giving of that greater measure (and extraordinary gifts) which in the New Testament is usually called, *the giving of the Spirit*. For (as Mr. Thomas Hooker and others express it :) the Spirit in working faith, doth but as it were make his way into the soul, and then dwelleth and worketh there afterward, as (saith he,) some birds first make their way into a hard tree, by stocking a hole in it, and afterward make their nest, and lay their young there.

Here note well, that we thought meet, before we expressed the particular work of the Spirit in Believers, to mention first the relative change of their states, which in order goeth between their Believing, and their further Sanctification : these we have expressed in four terms. The first in order, is our Conjunction to Christ as our Head, called by Divines, our Union with him. The second is, our Membership in the Universal Church, which is his Body. The third is our pardon, or Justification. The fourth is our Adoption,

Where

Where note first : that we call not these (the works of the Spirit) but put them in, as in a parenthesis, between our believing, and the works of the in-dwelling Spirit. 2. Yet we choose rather to put them in this part of our profession, then the former ; because as no man hath right to these Benefits, but through faith : so though they are not the effects of that faith (which the Spirit worketh) yet are they Consequents of it by vertue of Christs Promise, or new Law ; and though Faith be not the cause of them in strict sence, yet it is the Condition of our right in them ; and therefore they seem here to be placed as Divines commonly do between faith and Sanctification.

Note also that by being (sanctified to Christ as a peculiar people) we intend first the real change, commonly called Sanctification, and also the Relation, that thence followeth of being a separated, sanctified, dedicated, peculiar people ; and we take Sanctification not for that first work, commonly called Vocation, whereby Faith and Repentance are first wrought : but as the Scripture takes it for the following effects of the Spirit dwelling in us ; how the Spirit dwelleth or worketh in us, we presume not to define. Further note, that we describe the exercise of this Sanctification first in respect to the state, from which we are changed, where we judged it necessary to imitate the Church, which hath alwaies in Baptism required a renouncing the world, flesh, and Devil : and therefore Scripture making it ——— necessary to Salvation) we think it necessary that this be in our Creed, also we rather put in (mortifying the flesh, And overcoming the world, and the Devil) then merely striving against them, both because the first is the common Scripture language, and because it is not all striving, but that which ends in overcoming, is saving. 2. As for the state to which Sanctification brings us, we thought meet, 1. to put down the manner, and nature of the inclination it self in the Apostles words (*Zealous of good works*) least any should think that the external work is all. And for the exercise of it, we distribute it according to the Decalogue. 1. Into serving of God in holiness, which hath chief respect to the first table. 2. And in Righteousness, by which we specially mean the Duties of the second table. 3. Yet we thought it necessary to add (the special love of the Saints, and communion with them, and the hope of Christs coming, and everlasting life,) not as if we thought the Decalogue extended not to these, but because Christ in the Gospel hath in a singular, and eminent sort required them, and made them Duties so specially Evangelical, and necessary in particular. And the Antient Creed had [*the Communion of Saints*] which therefore we ought not to leave out. Note also, that though faith, love and obedience be mentioned both in the second part, and in the third : yet it is no vain repetition ; for in the
second

second part they are mentioned, as they appertain to Christs Legislation, and Judgement, and are required of man in order to his happiness; but in the third part they are mentioned as actually confer'd by the Holy Ghost. So everlasting life is mentioned in the second part, as given (*quoad ius*) by the Promise; and as actually which Christ will adjudge us to: but in the third part it is mentioned as the Object of Christian hope concerning the profession of Consent. Note 1. It was necessary we report the same things which were before express'd in the ——— profession of Assent; because it is (mostly) the same things which the understanding receiveth as true (together with the truth of Enunciations concerning them) and which the will receiveth as good. — I take the truth and authority, and sufficiency of Scripture to be plainly included in the Article of our Believing in the Holy Ghost (as I have said,) and therefore we may well require that it be consented to. Lastly, understand also, that when you promise to God to take his word, as Law, as your Rule: you shew hereby, that this Law must be studied, that you may understand it, *Psalms 1. 2, 3, &c.* Especially remember that it is here supposed, that you understand the ten Commandments, which shew you what is your duty, and also the great commands of the Gospel for Faith, Repentance, forgiving wrongs, loving the Brethren, and loving enemies, &c. which Christ has eminently set his Signature on; all this is implied also in your promise of sincere obedience. Also the Duties of hearing the Gospel preached, of Instructing your Families, *Deut. 6. 6.* Of constant and fervent Prayer, of the use of the Lords Supper, &c. are here implied.

FINIS.


TESTIMONIES

Out of the

NON-CONFORMISTS,

In the dayes of *Q. Elizabeth*, and
K. James, worthy of consideration
 how far they justify the prece-
 dent Action.

*First, Testimonies out of the Non-Conformists
 or Presbyterians in Q. Elizabeths dayes.*

SECT. I.  HE Authors of the Reformed discipline,
 confirmed by the Autho-
 rity of the Church and *Printed for*
 Magistrate at *Frankford*, T. V. 1642.
 p. 109. &c. of the trou-
 bles at *Frankford*, lay this down for the

order of proceeding to the execution of Discipline and Correction
 of offences.

Article 52. For as much as no Church is so perfect but offences
 may arise, For godly and charitable redressing and reforming of
 such, this order is to be observed. First, if any of the Congrega-
 tion be offensive in manners or doctrine to any of the Brethren, so
 that the offence be private and not publickly known, there can be no
 better order devised, then that which Christ himself hath appointed,
 which is, first brotherly to admonish him alone, if that do not pre-
 vail, to call one or two witnesses, if that also do not profit, then to
 declare it to the Ministers and Elders, to whom the Congregation
 hath given authority to take order in such cases, according to the
 discipline of the Church.

Article 54. Item, That it may be the better known, what is meant by this word, Discipline, or correction of vice, we think that there be three degrees of Ecclesiastical Discipline; the first that the offender acknowledg his fault, and shew himself penitent before the Minister and seniors: the second, That if he will not so do, as well his Original Crime, as also his contempt of the Ministers and Elders (who have the authority of the Church) be openly declared by one of the Ministers before the whole Congregation, and that he therefore make satisfaction both for his Original Crime, and also for his contempt of the Ministers before the whole Congregation, and that he be not admitted to the Communion before he have satisfied; the third, That if he remain still obstinate before the whole Congregation, after a time to him by the whole Congregation limited to repent in, he then shall be openly denounced excommunicate, which excommunication seeing it is the uttermost penalty of Ecclesiastical power, shall not therefore be executed until the matter be heard by the whole Church, or such as it shall specially appoint thereunto.

Article 55. Item, If any person shall be a notorious known offender, so as he is offensive to the whole Congregation, then shall the Ministers and Elders immediately call the offender before them, and travel with him to reduce him to true repentance, and satisfying the Congregation; which if he obstinately refuse to do, then one of the Ministers shall signify his offence and contempt to the whole Congregation, desiring them to pray for him, and further to assign him a day to be denounced excommunicate before the Congregation, except in the mean time the offender submit himself before the whole Congregation to the order of the discipline.

And whereas Mr. *Horne* hath objected against the 54 Article, That the authority of the Pastor and Seniors is all wiped away, for that every thing is therein referred to the confused multitude of the Congregation. Mr. *Whithead* answereth pag. 140. That except the matter be used as we have provided in the discipline, both the authority and liberty of the congregation is wiped away, and a meer tyranny established.

S E C T. II.

The authors of the first admonition to the Parliament say, pag. 6.

That to Ministers, Seniors and Deacons, is the whole Regiment of the Church committed, which consists especially in Ecclesiastical Discipline, the chiefest part and the last punishment whereof, is excommunication

by the consent of the church determined, if the offender be obstinate.

S E C T. III.

The Authors of the second Admonition to the Parliament say, pag. 58, 59. That the Consistory, which were to be had in every Congregation, should excommunicate the stubborn in that Congregation, making the whole Church privy to their doings, and shall upon repentance take order for the receiving such an one in again, making open profession of his or their repentance, to the satisfying of the Congregation; yet ever so must they excommunicate, and receive the excommunicate in again, that they require the assent of their whole Congregation, shewing the grievousness of his fact, and how they have proceeded with him by admonition, and his contempt, which they shall do both because their upright dealing may appeare to the whole Church, and because they may not usurp authority over the whole Church.

S E C T. IV.

Mr. T. C. in his first reply, pag. 147. saith, It is certain that St. Paul did both understand and observe the rule of our Saviour Christ;

Mr. Thomas
Cartwright.

but he communicateth the power of excommunication with the Church, and therefore it must needs be the meaning of our Saviour Christ, that excommunication should be by many, and not by one, and by the Church and not by the Minister of the Church alone; for he biddeth the Church of *Corinth* twice in the first Epistle, once by a Metaphor, another time in plain words, that they should excommunicate the incestuous person, and in the second epistle understanding of the repentance of that man, he entreateth them that they would receive him again; and therefore considering the absolution or reconciliation of the excommunicate doth pertain unto the Church, it followeth that the excommunication doth in like manner pertain unto it.

Afterwards he tells Dr. *Whitgift*, that to prove that the Church had nothing to do with excommunication he should have shewed, that Paul onely had the right of excommunication, and then saith he to him, you are manifestly convinced by St. Pauls words, which joineth the Church with him therein, saying, that he had decreed that the doer of that fact, by his spirit, and them gathered together in the name of Christ, and by his power should be given to Satan: and if it were in St. Paul alone, why doth he chide with the Church that they had not already excommunicated him, before he wrote unto them to signifie his will to excommunicate? And if it were in the Minister of the Church onely, why doth St. Paul chide and sharply rebuke the Church for that the incestuous man was not

cast forth? why doth he charge the Corinthians with that which was the onely fault of the Minister?

Now that Mr. *Cartwright* did hold that it pertaineth to a particular Church thus to excommunicate, appears, because p. 34. he saith, That in the primitive time Christians that were in one great city were faine to gather themselves out of all the corners, and from all the ends of the city, to one place being not able to divide themselves into many Parishes, so that we read that the Church which was at Antioch wrote unto the Church at Jerusalem, and that of Jerusalem unto them at Antioch, and St. Paul to the Church at Rome, at Ephesus, &c. which speeches do declare, that by all likelyhood in one great city they had but one Congregation.

And whereas Dr. *Whitgift* answereth, that the Apostle joined the Corinthians with him as lookers on, or as witnesses, not as doers in that action, Mr. T. C. in his second Printed A^o. 1577. reply, Part the second pag. 81. demands who hath taught him thus to play with the Word of God?

whereas S. Paul ascribeth the same cause of the corporal assembly of the Church for that action, which he doth unto that presence, wherewith he saith, his Spirit should be (after a sort) there; If therefore St. Pauls Spirit were (after a sort and as it might) there, to look on, and to be witness onely, then the Church was also; else let him shew us with what words St. Paul declareth that his Spirit should be there for one thing, and the Corinthians for another; but what a shameful defence this is, that one voice 1 Cor. 5. 12. declares, whereby the Apostle giveth unto the Church the judgment of this matter; now to judg or give sentence of Malefactors, is more (I think) then to look on, or be witness, and what that judgment is, is yet more clearly declared by that which followeth, where the Apostle saith verse 13. that the Lord judgeth those that are none of the Church; giving to understand that they had onely to use their censures upon those of the Church, and that they should leave the infidels to the judgment of God. So that if he say that the judgment of the Church is nothing but a looking on, &c. he must also expound these words, the Lord judgeth the infidels, that is, the Lord standeth by, and looketh on whilst some other punish them; likewise the writer to the Hebrews, Heb. 12. 15. giveth to the Church that they should provide that no poysoned root remain amongst them, which although it be carried of some from the person to the crime, yet it is certain both by the place of Moses, Deut. 29. 18. from whence it is taken, and by the scope of the Apostle, that it is to be understood of the persons, for he exhorteth the Church, first to give diligence that

that there be no such amongst them: then if there be, not to suffer them to remain to the infection of others, which yet is also more manifest, because that which he spake before by a Metaphor he expoundeth in the next verse, when he saith, Let there be no whoremonger or prophane person, &c.

And whereas Dr. *Whigist* had said that Paul chideth with the Church before he had signified that he would have them excommunicate (though it belonged not to the Church, because they did not complain of him.) T. C. pag: 82. saith, there is not a letter of this to be gathered in the Holy Scripture, and what a mischief had it been for the Church to have had no remedy for such a contagious disease at home?

S E C T. V.

The Author of the Fruitful Sermon on Rom. 12. asking pag. 83. how it comes to pass there is so many wicked wretches in England? saith, is not the cause evident? because we lack Elders and Governours of every congregation to admonish, correct, suspend and excommunicate such noisom, hurtful and monstrous beasts out of the house of God without respect of persons.

Mr. Chaderton, Mr.
of Em. Coll Cant.
Printed 1584.

S E C T. VI.

The Author of the learned discourse of Ecclesiastical Government, pag. 89. saith, that in every church there ought to be a Consistory of Elders or Governours which with the Pastor may take charge of Ecclesiastical Discipline; and pag. 91. he saith, the authority of the Pastor with the Elders is, first to punish offenders and bring them to repentance, or else to cut them clean from the church, as rotten and infected members, but here we have (saith he) to enquire for what offences the church may proceed to to sharp a punishment, for God forbid that the sword of excommunication should be drawn out to cut off the members of our body for every small disease that is in them, but onely when the disease is deadly, and the member rotted thereby, for we ought as hardly to be brought to excommunicate any of our brethren as we would have a legg or an arm cut off from our body, therefore the Popish tyranny is detestable, which thundreth out their pretended excommunication for every trifle, &c. as though it were but a small matter, to put men out of the protection of Christ, and to deliver them to the tyranny of Satan; lest therefore we should use such unreasonable rigour the Spirit of God teacheth us what manner of sins deserve excommunication, 1 Cor. 5. 11. the offences there mentioned,

Dr. Fulk,
Printed
1584.

and such like, are to be punished by excommunication; also an obstinate Heretick that will not repent by admonition is worthy of this punishment, *Tit.* 3. 10. *2 Tim.* 2. 16. *1 Tim.* 1. 20. *2 John* 10. 11. and not onely these great and notorious sins, deserve this correction but also lesser crimes, increased with contumacy and contempt of the Churches admonition, become worthy of the same castigation, therefore saith our Saviour Christ of private offences, *Matth.* 18. 15, 16. &c. the Apostle *St. Paul* likewise *2 Thes.* 3. 6, &c. concerning those that were idle, and walked disorderly, will have all gentle means used to bring them to labour and good order, but if they would not be reformed for any admonition he commandeth them to be separated by excommunication.

That this Author thought that these officers of particular Congregations ought for those offences to excommunicate (but with the consent of the people) appears; for pag. 84. he saith, there ought to be a Consistory or Seignory of Elders, or Gouverneurs, which ought to have the hearing, examination, determining of all matters pertaining to Discipline and Government of the Congregation: which authority of theirs nevertheless ought to be moderated, that their judgment may be rightly accounted the judgment of the whole Church; which thing consists in two points, that they be chosen by the consent of the whole Congregation; and then the second point for the moderation of their authority in such sort that their sentence may be the sentence of the Church, is this, that when the Consistory hath travelled in examining of causes pertaining to Ecclesiastical Discipline, and agreed what judgment ought to pass upon the matters, they propound it to the whole multitude, that it may be confirmed by their consent; whereof the Apostle *Paul* speaks touching the execution of excommunication (because the fact was manifest) *1 Cor.* 5. 4. *When you are gathered together with my spirit in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ deliver such an one to Satan.*

And afterward pag. 97. he saith, it is manifest that albeit the Apostle desired nothing more, then that the incestuous adulterer should be excommunicated, and therefore determined of him for his own part as absent in body but present in spirit, yet he acknowledgeth he could not be excommunicated without the consent of the Congregation, *being gathered together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor.* 5. 4.

S E C T. VII.

The Author of the full and plain Declaration of Ecclesiastical Discipline saith, pag. 172. That excommunication is a cutting off from the Church the party against whom such a sentence is given, and depriveth him from the blessed hope of the children of God, and waiting for the promises, together with the signs and seals thereof, which, both promises and Sacraments are given to the Church alone; so that by this, as it was in that most grievous sentence and condemnation of the Romans, all the Rights, Priviledges and Freedoms of a Citizen of the City of God are clean lost and taken away, and being cast out of the Kingdom of God, is delivered to the kingdom of darkness, seeing there is no mean, but that he who is not of the one Kingdom must be of the other. *Col. 1. 13.* Therefore our Saviour Christ declareth that by this sentence, a man is pronounced to be an Ethnick and a Publican, which being spoken in respect of the Jewes is as much as if one should say, now in respect of Christians, a Paynim, a Saracene or a Turk, and St. Paul declareth it to be a delivering to Satan, *1 Cor. 5. 5.* which sentence the more grievous it is, so much more care and heed is to be taken against whom we pronounce such a sentence, therefore this sword is to be handled and ruled by the word and Command of the High Judge, and to be drawn out onely against them, against whom he shall command it to be drawn; Now our Saviour *Matth. 18. 17.* declareth generally, that every one who shall be disobedient to the Church (exhorting him to acknowledge and bewail his offence) should be holden as an Ethnick and a Publican, and St. Paul more particularly declareth an Heretick is to be excommunicated, *Tit. 3. 10.* and those guilty of the crimes rehearsed, *1 Cor. 5. 11.* and *2 Thes. 3. 6.* Afterwards he saith pag. 174, 175. that as there hath been fault in too much rashness among the Papists, in pronouncing so heavy a sentence without due cause, so there hath bin no less fault in this, that by negligence this wholesom severity when just cause requireth is not executed, hereby the holy Mysteries of God are without any punishment daily profaned, the holy things are prostituted to sinful livers, and (which our Saviour forbiddeth) precious stones are cast before hogs and swine, yea the holy Mysteries not onely profaned, but the Church is brought into an undoubted danger, for as much as it is to be feared lest the rest of the body be infected with the same contagion, and even they themselves who be such, heape and double their condemnation, in coming to the Lords table; for besides that the worship of God is kept pure and

Mr. Travers,
Printed in Eng-
lish 1574 in 4^o.

undefiled by this severity, the whole Church also, and the parties themselves that are guilty are best by this means provided for, and that the Church is thus provided for, is shewed, 1 Cor. 5. 6, and that this doth pertain to the benefit of the guilty parties is shewed 1 Cor. 5. 5. the Apostle shewing this to be the end of delivering the incestuous man to Satan that his Soul might be saved in the day of the Lord, whereby we see that this is a Medicine, a sharp and bitter medicine indeed but not a deadly punishment.

That this Authors judgment was, that this excommunication should be with the consent of the people, appears, for pag. 177. he saith, by what he had spoken we may see by which of the three estates of lawfull Government (which are where one is Sovereign, or more, or all) the Church is governed, for as much as all things are governed by the authority of certain chosen men, who are chief in the Congregation for godliness and virtue, we may call the government of the Church, Aristocracy; but these chosen and pickt out men do so exercise this authority that there be no violence nor tyranny used, and therefore that they adjoin to their own authority (especially in matters of great weight as in choosing or deposing any officers, or in suspending, or excommunicating any man) the consent of all the people; for we read it to have been thus done even from the Apostles time till Discipline was corrupted, as appeareth in the Acts of the Apostles written by St. Luke, and the Ecclesiastical History of the primitive Church; so that in this respect it seemeth that the Church is governed rather by all then by a few, and therein to resemble that state of government wherein the Commonalty is chief.

That the judgment of this Author also was, that thus excommunication is to be used in particular Churches appeareth by what followeth, pag. 178. Neither (saith he) is this the manner of government of Parish-Churches onely, but the same also is to be kept in Synods, for therein the Sovereignty is reserved to Christ, by whose word all things are governed, as in a Monarchy, the assembly of Elders decree by common counsel, the people with all good will allowing of the Godly, Just and Honest determinations of the assembly, or making them void, and of none effect, if they be not such as in the last state, wherein the people hath to rule.

S E C T. VIII.

The Author of the Counterpoison gives these reasons, why it doth belong to the Pastor and Eldership of a particular Church to excommunicate by the consent of the people, pag. 469. &c.

Mr. Dudley Fenner, Printed in a part of a register, in 4^o.

First, saith he, If our Saviour Christ *Matth. 18.* when he saith, tell the Church, meant not one Bishop, because one cannot be a number, nor one alone a Church, and he goeth upward from one to two, from two to more, not contrarywise from two to one, neither can it be meant of many Churches, for then it must be all the whole Church (in the phrase of the Scripture) and it were a confusion and impossibility for many Churches, or the whole people, to hear all such Ecclesiastical causes, but do mean upon these reasons a particular Congregation; then our assertion is most true and certain; the first is proved, therefore the second is true.

Secondly, That which the Apostle makes the judgment of a particular Congregation, that must needs appertain to the Pastor and the rest of the Elders, as the governours and to the people as consenters, but this the Apostle plainly expresseth, *1 Cor. 5. 12. Why judg ye not those that are within? Separate him therefore from Amongst you.*

Thirdly, It is the especial duty of the Pastor by the authority of the Eldership to deliver the holy Sacraments to the worthy, and to detain them from the unworthy, then unless he should be compelled to give them to the unworthy, and withhold them from the worthy, excommunication must belong to him with his fellow Elders; but the first is manifest by the Scriptures, *Levit. 10. 11. Zep. 3. 3. 1 Corinth. 11. 26, 27.* Therefore the assertion is true, the consequence of the first part is manifest because he must deliver them to all not suspended, and excommunicated, and to the rest he must not; the consent of the ancient times agree to this, and he quotes the Canons of several Councils, and the sayings of *Jerome, Cyprian, Augustine.*

SECT. 9.

Mr. *Udal*,
Printed in 4^{to}

The Author of the *Demonstration* saith P.81. That Christ hath ordained excommunication for the last remedy against sin, and only to be used when neither admonition, reprehension, nor separation from the external communication of the Saints, for a time will serve, *Mat. 18. 15*. And that it cutteth a man off from the Church of God, and giveth him over to Satan, as one in a desperate case, *1 Cor. 5. 5*. And P.82. That excommunication may not be done by one man, but by the eldership; the whole Church consenting thereunto, because Christ hath commanded it to be done by the Church, *Mat. 18. 15*. St. Paul enjoyned the Church; when they were met together, to execute this censure, *1 Cor. 5. 5*. And because those must excommunicate that are to deal in the other parts of discipline, but the other parts of discipline are exercised by the Church, as he had proved; the authors he quotes as consenting with him are these; *Ciprian* saith, (*Ciprian l. 3. Ep. 10*) He would never do any thing in his charge, without the counsel of his elders, and consent of the people. *Ep. 14*. The elders and other Church-officers have as well power to absolve as the Bishop.

Ep. 19. For as much as absolution *belongeth* to all, I alone dare not do it. *Augustine* saith (*Aug. l. 3. Cont. epist. permen.*) It helpeth much to make the party more ashamed, that he be excommunicated by the whole church. *Jerome* saith (*Jerom ad dem. ep. 1.*) That the elders have interest in other censures of the Church, and the Church it self in excommunication. *Bucer* saith (*Bucer de reg. Chr. l. 1. c. 9.*) That St. Paul accuseth the *Corinthians*, for that the whole Church had not excommunicated the incestuous person.

SECT. 10.

Mr. *William Stoughton* Professor of the
civil Law.

The author of the abstract, out of the Canons argueth thus against excommunication by one alone. P. 166, 167. No chief member of any body, can do any thing in the body, without the consent and assistance of his fellow members, but every Bishop is a chief member of a body, therefore no Bishop can do any thing in that body, without the consent and assistance of his fellow members; the reason of the first proposition is this; whatsoever is good or evil for one member, the same is good or evil for every other member: and being good for one, it must needs be allowed of all; and being bad for one, it must needs be disallowed of all, which natural reason taking place in the natural body, the Law translated unto the political or spiritual body, and

and willeth that the same be allowed of all ;
that toucheth all , and if any thing once
touch and concern all, it cannot by another
rule in law be translated to one ; that which

*Quod omnes tanget
ab omnibus approbetur.*

is once mine , cannot without my will be taken from me again.

Moreover touching excommunication ,

*Quod semel meum est sine
mea voluntate à me aufer-
ri, non potest.*

there is one other special reason, why the
Bishop may not excommunicate alone ,
without the consent of the Chapter, be-
cause this kind of punishment is the
greatest punishment in the Church; for it is said by law to be *atæne
mortis damnatio, et satanæ traditio*, a condemnation to eternal death,
and a delivery to Satan.

And afterwards speaking against it as a custome, that, that cus-
tome that one should excommunicate alone , is against the force of
Ecclesiastical discipline, and liberty of the Church , and therefore
not available, P. 187. he thus argueth, whatsoever is against the
policy of the Church of Christ, instituted by God , for the whole-
some administration and government thereof, the same is against
the force and power of Ecclesiastical discipline, but so is that custome,
&c.

The first proposition is plain from the definition of Ecclesiastical
discipline, defined to be the policy of the Church of Christ, institu-
ted by God, for the good administration & government of the same:
The second proposition, I prove, Because whatsoever is not instituted
by God, for the government of the Church of Christ, the same is not
the policie of the Church of Christ ; but that custome is not in-
stituted by God , for the government of the Church of Christ,
excommunication by many is instituted by God, *Mat. 18. 16, 17, 18.*
1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. Another condition of a custome lawfully prescribed ,
is, that the same should not be against the liberty of the Church
of Christ ; now that that custome is against the liberty of the
Church of Christ , appears, because it is against the liberty of the
Congregation of the faithful ; which I prove from the essence and
nature of liberty, which, saith the Lawyer, is a natural faculty to do
that, that every man is willing to do, unless by force or law, he be
restrained : by this definition , of the liberty of a natural man, may
appear, what the freedome of a man new born ought to be; namely,
such a gracious liberty, whereby he might thoroughly without res-
traint, perform whatsoever he would in the spiritual service of the
Lord, unless by violence or positive law, he were restrained : now by
that custome, the whole company of the faithful in that place, is
excluded from this franck ability, to do what it would in the service
of

of God, namely to banish from her Society and Fellowship all such as have by their own misdemeanors banished themselves from the obedience of the Lord.

SECT. 11.

The Author of the Humble Motion to the L. of the Council, having shewed, That there should be an Eldership in every particular Church, saith, p. 19, 20 &c. In the Censures, Pastors, Teachers and Governing Elders have the full Authority. *Matth.* 18. 17, 18, 19. except that in so great a matter as Excommunication the people have their interest, in that a Member is to be cut off; therefore that was done in a fuller Assembly, namely of the whole Church, *1 Cor.* 5. 4. and the whole Church is directed by *Paul* to receive such an one again, *2 Cor.* 2. 6, 7.

SECT. 12.

The Author of the Book stiled, *De Pol. & Discipl. Civ. & Eccles. tum Israel. tum Christianæ Reip.* proves, That the Officers of a particular Church, hath power to excommunicate from the instance of the Church of *Corinth*.

The Apostle in the first of the *Corinthians*, exhorts the Corinthians, that being met together by divine authority, he who married his fathers wife, should be delivered to Satan, and lest any should think, that what *Paul* commanded the Officers of the Church of *Corinth* was an humane invention, therefore he saith, In the Name of the Lord, and with the power of our Lord *Jesus Christ*; which is all one as if he had said, Gather your selves together by divine appointment and being gathered together by the Authority of *Christ*, who sits as Judge amongst you, excommunicate him that is convicted of incest and rebellion.

Pag. 49. *In priore ad Corinthios Paulus Corinthios hortatur, ut Congregatis undè omnibus, pro jure divino, is qui patris uxorem habebat, Sæcra traheretur, &c. At ne quis putaret hoc quod faciendum ecclesiæ Corinthianæ præsulibus præcipiebatur, Paulus humanum esse inventum; idcò dixit in nomine Domini, & cum potestate Domini nostri Jesu Christi; nam perinde est, ac si hoc modo locutus esset, congregate vos juxta Domini ordinationem, & congregati, incestus, ac rebellionis, crimine convictum pro auctoritate Christi, qui iudex inter vos sedet excommunicate.*

Secondly,

Secondly, *Testimonies out of the Non-Conformists in King James his dayes.*

SECT. I.

THe Author of the Reasons, proving a necessity for Reformation, pag. 18 &c. proves, That every particular Congregation of Christians by Gods expresse Word ought to have and use the Ecclesiastical Government of it self; viz. according to the order set down for a visible Church in Gods Word, by three things.

First, The visible Churches of Christ were in number many * and divers; (and not only one) by the Ordinance of God himself. * 1 Cor. 11. 16. and 4. 17, &c.

Secondly, Christ and his Apostles instituted and left particular ordinary or constant Congregations true and proper visible Churches, or they left not any one visible Church (in the whole world) constitute and compact of diverse ordinary and constant Congregations.

Both these Points are most manifest and undeniable in these places of holy Scripture following; First that flourishing and plentiful Church of Corinth was * but one particular Congregation, whereof the Apostle saith thus, *When the Whole Church is come together* (ὅτε τὸ αὐτὸ) *into one place*; which also we may likewise affirm of the Church of * Antioch, and of * Rome, and of * Jerusalem, and of * Ephesus, in those dayes; for though these Cities were great and populous, yet being unbelieving, and hateful enemies to the Gospel, each of them had then of faithful Christians, but one particular constant Congregation only, &c. All which being considered it is plain, That in the greatest Cities, or wheresoever the Apostles appointed and left true and proper visible Churches, particular constant Congregations: Which further also appears by those many and distinct

Mr. H. Jacob.
Printed 1604.

* 1 Cor. 14. 23

* Acts 14. 27.

" Justin Mart.
Ap. 2.

" Act. 15. 22;
25

† Acts 20. 28.

^a Gal. 1. 2.

ⁱ Cor. 16. 1.

^b 2 Cor. 8. 19, 23

^c 1 Cor. 16. 19.

^d 2 Cor. 8. 24.

^e 1 Thess. 2. 14.

Gal. 1. 21.

^f Acts 9. 31.

^g Acts 15. 41.

^h Acts 14. 23.

distinct Churches of ^a Galatia, of ^b Macedonia, of ^c Asia, of ^d Achaia, of ^e Judea, of ^f Gallile and Samaria, of ^g Syria, and ^h Cilicia, of ⁱ Lycania and Pisidia, &c. Each of these being severally but one particular constant Congregation; whereunto most fitly agreeth that injunction and command of our Savior Christ touching a visible Church, where he instituteth the external spiritual power thereof saying, *Tell the Church or Congregation, if he hear not the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heiben and a Publican.* Matth. 18. 17.

Where he must necessarily be understood of a particular Congregation, which may be told and spoken to only: as also that description of a Visible Church which our publick Authority in England teacheth, *Act. 19. viz. A Visible Church is a congregation of faithful people where the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments ministred, &c.* Dr Bilson also (*Bilson ag. Semin. lib. 2. pag. 70.*) where he saith, The Church is never taken in the Old or New Testament for the Priests alone, but generally for the whole congregation of the faithful; in *Act. 20. 28.* the church is taken for the people. And (*Lib. 3. p. 70.*) it is *Mat. 18. 17* the whole multitude of the Faithful, where he and they (the offender and the offended) live.

The third point to be marked, serving for the proof of the proposition before, is a general and sure maxime in Divinity, *viz.* The true and proper visible Churches of Christ, both heretofore, now and hereafter, though many in number, yet all are but one in nature, form, and constitution; and each of them hath simply one and the same spiritual or Ecclesiastical power, immediately from Christ (not derived from any other) to govern it self withal; to which purpose the Scripture often speaks of the visible Church, indefinitely as of only one; as *Mat. 22. 2. &c. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Mat. 6. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Isa. 2. 1, 2, 3. 1 Tim. 3. 5.* Because in nature and form, and in the true constitution, as also in the spiritual power thereof, it is only one; yea, it saith also in plain terms, *that there is one body.* Eph. 4. 4. *1 Cor. 12. 13.* Where is meant the Church; but it is to be understood, that it is one in nature and power, as I said, which must of necessity be so, because Christs institution of a visible Churches external government before noted, *Mat. 18. 17.* must belong equally to every true and proper visible Church; wherefore also the nature, form, and constitution of every one, must be the same that this is, which here Christ signifieth in *Matthew*, which evidently was a particular Congregation, as before we observed:

to which purpose, one of our adversaries, a famous school-Divine, (*Hook.li.3.p.13.2*) sheweth, that by clear and undeniable reason, the government Ecclesiastical belongeth to every visible Church, properly so called. And the practice of the Apostolick Churches, doth justifie and confirm it, which being ordinary particular Congregations each of them, did or might by their ministers (and themselves in presence consenting) chuse elders, *Act 14.23. 2 Cor. 8.19.* And excommunicate offenders, *1 Cor. 5.4.5 Mat. 18.17.* Neither certainly did Christ ever institute, or the Apostles practice diverse kinds, or forms of visible churches, neither let they any to have greater, or lesser spiritual power then other, &c. Whence now it floweth by a necessary and undeniable consequence, that these three conclusions insuing are likewise certain and true. 1. That every particular ordinary congregation of faithful people in England is a true and proper visible church, *jure divino*, by right from God. 2. Every such congregation here and every where is indued with power immediately from Christ to govern it self, Ecclesiastically or spiritually. 3. Every true and proper visible Church every where, is but one ordinary or constant congregation only. And when no one church consisteth, neither can consist of many ordinary distinct congregations; wherefore no diocesan church is ordained or allowed by Christ, no provincial, no national, and so likewise no universal visible church with an external government, correspondent to the same, as the catholikes heretically do hold: A universal militant church, I deny not; but a universal or catholike visible church, with correspondent government; I do deny, and so likewise the rest, &c.

Afterwards *P. 27. 28.* Whereas some imagined that they saw their grounds to be directly against a Monachy; that this Ecclesiastical government being popular (say they) it can never be manag'd without trouble, and tumult: besides other things, by way of answer, he saith, It is true, we acknowledg, we allow and desire elections and excommunications by the free consent of the people, of each particular ordinary congregation; neither is this to be reckoned any popularity, which can either be prejudicious to princes, or tumultuous in it self; No, it cannot be an inconvenient order, but most reasonable for any place or people in the world, seeing we do expressly hold this assertion no otherwise (and we heartily pray that it may be noted) but as it is grounded on foure circumstances, 1. In regard it is (as we are well assured) a Divine order and Ordinance instituted for each church, by Christ and his Apostles. 2. Considering that we allow the peoples consent, and voice-giving in elections, excommunications, &c. to be done only by the Christian people of one parish, that is of one particular ordinary congregation only,

only, and by no greater and larger number of people, by any means.
 3. Considering that in the manner hereof, we hold this only to be necessary and ordinary, that the Ecclesiastical guides here (apart from the people) do first by themselves prepare and determine the whole matter, namely in such sort that the people may not need to do ought afterward, but only consent with them, and freely signify their consent. 4. If any where it should fall out, that this people thus guided and so being few, will yet presume to be in their church-elections, &c. unruly and violent; then the Princes next dwelling office of Justice, may and ought to make them keep peace and quietness.

Afterward P. 80. &c. he tells us, Some will not yeild that every particular congregation or christians, should be allowed for a distinct, and a proper church visible, and so to enjoy their own Ecclesiastical government, which in themselves, albeit against it, they have no reason unless perhaps this only; if it were so (they will say) yet will not thereby all things become perfect, somewhat notwithstanding will be wanting or amiss oftentimes, how shall this be holpen or amended? He answereth, somewhat will be amiss always in whatsoever Ecclesiastical government on earth; nevertheless there is no need of any Ecclesiastical unwritten traditions in Christs church: we believe and know Gods written word to be sufficient, a greater Ecclesiastical government, then the churches we know none; there is nothing without the church above it, viz. Ecclesiastically and spiritually, yet it is true (besides the magistrates honourable assistance) there is great and singular, yea, sometimes in a sort, necessary help to be had by Synods. But touching any certain government by Synods, or necessary imposing of their Synodal conclusions, decrees, or Canons upon churches without their particular free consent; this seemeth to be a meer human Ordinance, I cannot find it (either expresse or by necessary consequence) in any part of Christs Testament: Thus writeth hereof the Reverend Mr. Whitaker (*Whit. de conciliis. p. 44*) *Quod omnes attingit, ab omnibus approbari debet*; that which concerns all, ought to be approved of all. Again (p. 23.) *Concilia si simpliciter necessaria sint, Christus alicubi praecepisset celebrari, aut ejus saltem Apostoli: quod tamen nusquam ab illis, factum esse legimus*; If councils were simple and necessary, Christ some where would have commanded to keep them, or at least his Apostles, which yet we do not read, that they did any where. Further (p. 35.) *Esi respice, de quibus in concilio, deliberatur et consultatur sint sacra et religiosa; tamen hoc ipsum con-regare episcopos est mere πολιτικόν*. Al though the things deliberated and consulted of in a council be holy and religious, yet this thing to assemble Bishops, or pastors of divers churches together is meerly civil.

After-

Afterwards p. 45. he makes use of this as an argument, that the Church which is to have a minister ought to be present, and to shew a liking and consent in their ministers calling, because in the Apostles times, the Church had a consent in excommunication, as it appears, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5 & 13. Which agreeth with Christs own Ordinance and precept, Mat. 18. 17. Now (saith he) if the Church was to excommunicate; surely the Church also was to elect her minister, for these are the two main parts of the holy government, Ecclesiastical, both which must belong to the Church, equally and alike.

Again p. 51. he proves that there was then a necessity of Reformation, because there was grievous sacrilege committed in depriving the ordinary pastors and teachers of all the Churches in England (the Apostles true successors) of their office and ministry of binding and loosing, forgiving and retaining the scandalous sins of their own flocks.

Afterwards p. 57. &c. he layes down this assertion, That for the space of two hundred years after Christ, the visible Churches using Government were particular ordinary Congregations only; and proves both branches thus, first, That a Church was then but one ordinary congregation, is proved by these Testimonies following. First (saith he) let us consider that in the Apostles days, the ordaining of Elders $\chi\lambda\pi\acute{o}\lambda\omega\ \chi\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha\upsilon$ City by City, Tit. 1. 5. And church by Church, Acts 14. 23. was all one thing, because in each city, in those times there were not many Churches in number, but one only proper Church or Congregation of Christians, as before is proved. Then for the next age, Ignatius plainly sheweth the common state of the visible Churches in his time, also to be such, where he thus writeth (Ignat. ad. Tral.) Without a Bishop, without a Senate of Elders, without deacons, &c. without these is no Church, no company of Saints, no holy Congregation; further also perswading the Church of *Philadelphia*, to unity and concord, he saith, I exhort, you use one faith, one preaching, one supper of the Lord, for there is but one communion table, to the whole church, (here in this city) and one Bishop with the company of Elders, and deacons. If we translate $\pi\alpha\sigma\eta\ \tau\eta\ \epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$, as some like better (to every Church) distributively, then our attention is more clearly avouched.

Again, touching the church of *Philadelphia*, he saith, The Bishop is Gods Ambassador to a people that are together in one place, he saith also so much touching another visible church, namely, in the city *Magnesia*, all of you come together into the same place to prayer; Justin Martyr shewing the manner of the Churches, worshipping of God in the cities, where they were, observeth the same,

he saith that on the Sunday, as it is called, all (the christians) dwelling in the Cities, or abroad in the country, do come together into the same place; it is very like that this was specially spoken of the church of Rome, seeing there Justin wrote and offered up his Apology, to *Antoninus* the Emperor.

Tertullians Testimony also seemeth very agreeable in this point, where speaking of christians ordinary congregations in cities, in his time, he saith, *Corpus sumus*, &c. we are all one body, &c. and again, *Coimus in latum et aggregationem*, we all come together into a company and congregation; he saith also of the same singular congregation, *Ibidem est censura divina*, &c. there are divine censures exercised; the judgment is given with greater weight, &c. *Eusebius* History sheweth that the churches of the most famous cities were each of them primitively no more but a parish only, that is but one ordinary constant congregation only; as when he names, *lib. 3. 11.* the church of Jerusalem, the parish of Jerusalem; and *lib. 3. 28.* the church of *Ephesus*, the parish of *Ephesus* and so of *Alexandria*, of *Hierapolis*, of *Corinth*, of *Sardis*, of *Lyons*, and divers churches, the parish of *Crete*; he quotes also *Epiphanius contra Hares. 73.*

Secondly, That particular ordinary congregations had in themselves their own government Ecclesiastical; this is plain by that of *Ignatius* writing to one of them thus, It is meet for you as being the church of God, to chuse by common consent your Bishop; and

to another particular church thus, (*ad Smyrn.*) In the church which is with you at *Smyrna*, there is not another thing above the Bishop, he meaneth the Bishop or pastor of the particular congregation is of greatest Authority

and above any other, there whomsoever; so that they in that congregation had all government simply and solely among themselves; speaks here of governing spiritually, not civilly, for thus the magistrate is supreme, in and over each church. *Tertullian* in the place before cited sheweth as much, speaking of each particular ordinary congregation, there are divine censures, they judge with great weight and advisedness, as being sure God seeth them, the approved elders do govern these censures, there is no suspicion of any restraint, or abridging, particular ordinary congregations, of their own spiritual government, till *Dionysius* the 13. Bishop of *Alexandria* at loosest.

S E C T. I I.

Printed 1610.

The same Author in his divine beginning, at institution of Christs true visible or ministerial Church, p. 2. &c. he gives this definition

Christ

Christ's true visible church. A true visible and ministerial church of Christ, is a number of faithful people joyned by their willing consent, in a spiritual outward society, or body politick, ordinarily coming together into one place instituted by Christ in his New Testament; and having the power to exercise Ecclesiastical government, and all other spiritual Ordinances (the means of salvation) in and for it self, immediately from Christ: in the which definition (saith he) as the whole nature of Christ's true ministerial church is evident, so out of these words there [Of a spiritual outward society, or body politick, ordinarily coming together into one place] we are to observe amongst other things, namely that Christ's true ministerial church hath in it a power of spiritual policy, not compounded, but such as is single, that is over persons, not of many ordinary congregations, but of one ordinary congregation only: Again, here we are well to observe that the compound, and the single or uncompounded policy or government do differ the one from the other, by a main and special difference in the very kind, nature and form, (not in the accident) of the very government. For first it is manifest that these two, *viz.* A simple and uncompounded form of government, and a compound form consisting of sundry inferior, and subordinate politick bodies, are contra-divided species, or opposite kinds of government in general: And therefore they must needs differ the one from the other, by a specificall, that is, by an essential difference, which may be further seen and exemplified by comparing the form or kind of government, *Diocesan*, *Provincial*, *National*, or *universal*; and namely that of the old Jewish Church, which was national, or rather after a sort, universal under the law, with the ordinary government of the Christian particular congregations under the Gospel, these spiritual outward governments (as all see) differ in their nature, and in their proper essential form, not only the one ceasing necessarily, and being no more when the other cometh in place, but also most evidently in this, that in the one a Minister may discharge his whole office by himself; in the other he cannot without substitutes and deputies, which is without controversy, a substantial difference: finally all men know that these kinds of governments, *viz.* *Democracy*, *Aristocracy*, and *Monarchy* do differ formally, and essentially, the one from the other; now the christian churches true and right government (in this regard that the whole company of the people do give there free consent therein) is a certain *Democracy*, the *Diocesan*, *Provincial* and *Catholick* governments are *Monarchical*, or at the best are *Aristocratical*; let not any be offended, that the churches true and right government is said to be a *Democracy* or popular government. This government is to be informed, directed, by the pastors chiefly,

and also by the grave assistant elders; and therefore indeed this Government is not simply and plainly democratical, but partly Aristocratical, and partly Monarchical, and so it is the next Government, which the learned do judge to be the best Government.

Afterwards in the prosecution of his third argument, he saith in *Mat.* 18. 17. By the Church is meant a particular ordinary Congregation, or a company of christians, using to assemble in one place with authority, for the managing of their own spiritual affairs, so that Christ teacheth; yea, and requireth in this place of Scripture, that his visible and ministerial Church shall be ever of one certain outward form, namely of this special form, of a particular ordinary Congregation, and of none other, for this sentence of Christ our Saviour [Tell the Church, &c.] must ever universally and perpetually have force and use among Christians. I am not ignorant, that against this sense of this place, there are many objections made by sundry gainsayers of the truth, but all in vain.

Obj. Some object, and say, that this assembly is meant of the Jews Synagogue, and not of any Christian meeting, because at this time there was not any Christian Congregation in the world.

Ans. I answer, there is no one circumstance, in all the text that requireth this sentence to be meant of the Jews Synagogue, but there are many clear circumstances to the contrary, as afterward will appear.

As for that which is here further said, that this word (*ἐκκλησία*) assembly) cannot be meant of any Christian-meeting, because at that time there was not any Christian-Congregation in the world. I answer, it is to be understood, not of any one particular assembly, definitely, but indefinitely, and generally of Christian assemblies, which should be afterward; for as *Moses* in the wilderness prescribed many orders, which afterward should be, and were kept in Canaan, albeit the people were not yet come thither, even so doth Christ Jesus in this place, he doth note out, he limiteth and confineth his ministerial Church indefinitely, which should be gathered together shortly afterward, and should be set up by those his Disciples, to whom he here speaketh, shewing that it should be an (*ἐκκλησία*) ordinary Congregation, and none other larged or defused company; and thus he here authorizeth the same to have power of spiritual government; that is, to be his visible Church, and also he doth prescribe and appoint here afore-hand, the special order and form of his Church-Government, which should afterward be established, viz. that it should be by the Churches special cognition, and con-

sent, for he saith, *Tell the church, if he bear not the church, let him, &c.*

Obj. Yet some urge farther; and say, how could the Disciples then know what the word Church or Congregation should mean, seeing then at that time there was no such assembly (namely of Christs Disciples) in all the world?

An. I answer, That the Doctrine thereof might well and rightly be delivered by our Saviour before-hand, though his followers did not presently understand it, as the Doctrine of Christs resurrection was delivered long before it was understood, *Mat. 16. 21.* Likewise the calling of the gentiles, *Luke 12. 29. Matth. 22. 9, 10. John 10. 16.* And also this, that Christs Kingdome should not be any worldly Kingdome, *John 18. 16. Mat 20. 26. &c.* For which cause, Christ promised his Spirit to his Disciples, which should bring all things in due time to their remembrance, that he had before taught them, *John 14. 26 & 16. 13.* So that they should all then in convenient time and order, understand his words, though at first they did not. Secondly, Though as yet there was no such Congregation of Christians at this time, yet the Disciples might very well understand presently what he said because other Congregations and assemblies were not things unknown to them at that time, &c.

Here he is large in answering the objections of *Erasmus*, and therein answereth those that will have this place understood, though religiously and spiritually, and concerning Church-Government, yet so as that it should signifie a consistory of Church-Governours, distinct from the Congregation of the people, they say this place is to be taken figuratively by a Synecdoche, of the whole for a part, and not in the proper sense of the words.

I answer, First there is no cause in the world, nor urgent reason why it should be so taken here, wherefore I avouch it ought not to be taken figuratively, for alway in such case, the general Rule of interpreting Scripture requireth that it be properly understood: I say when there is no special and necessary cause, why it should be an unproper speech.

Secondly, This must needs be meant here of the whole assembly of the people, considering that never in any author, no use of speech (meaning Ecclesiastically) for the space of two hundred years after Christ, this word *Ecclesia* was taken but only for the whole assembly of the Church, wherefore it is strange to take it in this place contrary to all good Authority, &c.

Obj. Afterward, it is objected farther, that the 21 verse of this chapter, requireth often, and (as it were) continual forgiving of our brother, offending us, which sheweth that the offences here spoken of are private injuries, and that here in the chapter

before going, we are not willing to bring them forth to Ecclesiastical censure.

Ans. The 21. verse hindreth not the bringing forth of their offences to Ecclesiastical censure, this verse requireth indeed the private and personal forgiving the wrong done to us, even continually, that is, that in our hearts we bear him no kind of grudge or malice for the same; howbeit we may, yea, we must seek to the spiritual means appointed by Christ for cureing our brothers soul, lying in sin, or else that he may be removed, least like the scabbed sheepe, he infect the rest; this may well be done, and yet that personal forgiving, have place also, &c.

Afterward, His ninth argument is this, If the authority and power of church-government doth stand in the churches free consent, by the absolute and immutable Commandment of Christ, then his true visible and ministerial Church is an ordinary and particular Congregation only, and he alone is the author, institutor, and framor of the same his Church and Government every where, but the authority and power of Church-Government doth stand in the Churches free consent by the absolute and immutable Commandment of Christ, seeing that Christ hath simply commanded (that is without respect of any changeable circumstances) Church-Government by the Churches free consent, for the Apostles taught Churches simply to practice Church-Government, by the Churches free consent; the consequence is clear from the 18. *Mat* 20. 1 *Cor* 11. 1, 2, 3. the assertion is proved, in that the Apostle speaking of one part of the Church government, saith 1 *Cor* 5. 13. Put out, or cast out from among your selves, this wicked man; and 2 *Thes*. 3. 14. If any man obey not our saying in this letter, note him and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; this he writeth and giveth in charge to the severall whole and intire Churches: likewise concerning absolution of the penitent sinner, he writeth to the whole church, that they would be willing to consent thereto, 2 *Cor*. 2. 8. Wherefore I pray you that ye would confirm your love toward him; and to this purpose he mentioneth them all, verse 3. 5. the very same, the Apostles taught by their practise, concerning the making of Church ministers another part of Church-Government, for *Paul* and *Barnabas*, ordained elders, *Acts* 14. 23. by the peoples, lifting up their hands, or by their free voice-giving, throughout every Church; the like did the Apostles in the Church of Jerusalem, *Acts* 6. 2. The twelve called the multitude of the Disciples together, and said, &c. wherefore (verse 3.) brethren look ye out among you, &c. here the Apostles appoint the people of the Church, to chuse their own deacons, but they have much more reason to have a free consent in the choosing of their pastors, by how much more

dear

dear the safety of their souls, is then the right distribution of their money.

Last of all, the same they did yeild to the people (so far as was possible, that they might) in the chusing and appointing of *Matthias* to be an Apostle; as appeareth, *Acts* 1. 23. and they presented two &c. and verse 26. And he was by common consent, counted with the eleven Apostles: Again in another point of Church-Government; namely in determining and concluding a controversy in religion, the Apostles took the expresse consent of the people, as appears, *Acts* 15. 22, 25. which surely was for example to posterity, though in respect of the Apostles teaching, it was not necessary.

S E C T. I I I.

The same Author in his declaration, and plain-
er opening of certain points, with a sound comfir- Printed 1612.
mation of some other, contained in his Divine be-
ginning, &c. (seeing exception was taken, that he should therein
assert, that a visible and ministerial Church is a company of people
assembling for the exercising of Religion, and administering among
themselves, the holy things of God, and particularly the whole Ec-
clesiastical government, as occasion requireth; there may be a Church
(some say) which administreth not the whole ecclesiastical Govern-
ment) he answereth, p. 8. 9. that there is no visible ministerial or po-
litical Church, if it be of Christ, but it hath power and right from
him, to administer the whole Ecclesiastical Government, as well
as any part, though I doubt not a true Church may be abridged in
the actual execution of the Government, as also of some other of
Gods Ordinances.

And where exception was also taken, that he should say, that
Christs true ministerial Church is such as hath power over persons,
not of many Congregations, but of one ordinary Congregation.
p. 10. &c. he proves his assertion thus, Because in Christs and the
Apostles institution, and practice all ministerial Churches, were
but one ordinary Congregation only (i.e.) each of them consisted
of people belonging to no more ordinary Congregations, then one
only, &c.

Object. If any reply that to be but one ordinary Congregation,
or many is no substantial or assential difference in a visible Church,
and then this is a changeable condition therein, and may be altered
by the discretion of men.

Ans. Here I deny the first part of this objection; it is a substan-
tial difference in a visible Church, to be but one ordinary Congre-

gation or many, or at least these divers estates are inseparably joined to the essential differences of visible and political churches: his Arguments to prove it are these; first, that body politick which admitteth not the peoples free consent in their ordinary government differeth by a substantial and essential difference from a body politick which admitteth the same freedom, but a visible church Diocesan or Provincial or larger, is a body politick that admitteth not the peoples free consent in their ordinary Government, and a church which is but one ordinary congregation is a body politick that admitteth this freedom and can admit it well, &c.

Secondly, That church which out of the very nature and form of the constitution thereof maketh plurality-men and non-residence lawful and good Ministers of the Gospel, the same differeth by a substantial difference from that church where no Minister can be so, but the Diocesan church and Provincial and larger are churches of that nature; the chief and principle Pastors in these have charge of Souls of many ordinary congregations, also in such wise as that they neither do nor can yield their ordinary personal presence to their people, and they surely are plurality-men and non-residence, &c. His fifth reason is this, That visible and political church which hath her foundation in Christs Testament, and also hath set bounds and limits there, differeth essentially from that church, which neither hath set bounds and limits in Christs Testament, nor any foundation there. But a church which is only but one ordinary congregation hath her foundation in Christs Testament, and also hath set bounds and limits there, and a Diocesan or Provincial church hath neither, &c.

But because the consequence of his Arguments (*viz.* If in Christs and the Apostles institution and practice all visible churches were each of them but one ordinary congregation then all Christs true churches now, still, and for ever are so and ought to be so) is true but upon supposition, that in Christs and the Apostles institution and practice all churches then, were each of them but one ordinary congregation; he therefore pag. 20. &c. endeavoureth to prove it. First, Every visible Church which had the peoples free consent in their ordinary government rightly appointed, the same was onely one ordinary congregation, for, as he said pag. 14. This freedom of the Christian people orderly and religiously practised in a church, maketh that the said church of necessity must consist of persons belonging not to many ordinary congregations, and those meeting in far remote places, &c. but all Christs true visible churches mentioned in the New Testament had the peoples free consent in their ordinary Government rightly appointed as hath been proved. His fifth reason is, if the most flourishing church of

Corinth

Corinth in the Apostles times was in the whole but one ordinary congregation then all other churches at that time were so too, for all true churches of Christ they had then but one form, nature and constitution. But the most flourishing church of Corinth in the Apostles time was in the whole but one ordinary congregation, for so the Apostle saith of it, *1 Cor. 14. 23. When the whole Church is come together into one place*, the like we may note chap. 11. 20. and 5. 4. To this it is idle, to say as some do, that those words, *The whole church came together into one place*, are to be understood distributively, of many several ordinary congregations then belonging to the church of Corinth; those words are evidently spoken touching all, and to all them to whom the Epistle is directed, and also in that manner; but the Epistle is directed to the church of Corinth in general collectively, *1 Cor. 1. 2.* Therefore these words are spoken to the whole Corinthian church in general collectively, & so they met; some further object *2 Cor. 1. 1.* to the church of Corinth with all the Saints which are in all Achaia, as if all the Saints that were in all Achaia made then but one visible church with that at Corinth; and so the Corinthian church was then a Diocesan or Provincial church; but as well may they conclude from *1 Cor. 1. 2.* To the church at Corinth Saints by calling, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, &c. As well I say may they from hence conclude that all who called on the name of Christ in every place then made but one visible church with that at Corinth, and so the Corinthian church then was an universal visible church. His sixth reason is this, if the Apostles where they speak of Christians set in outward order through a Province, do never mention any one general church of that Province or of a Diocese, but alwaies many several churches, such as were each of them one ordinary congregation onely, then in the Apostles times there was no Provincial or Diocesan church, but onely such as were each of them one ordinary congregation onely. But where the Apostle speaks of Christians set in outward order through a Province, greater or lesser, they never mention any one general church of the Province, but alwaies many several churches, as is to be seen by their naming plurally the churches of Galatia: *1 Cor. 16. 1. Gal. 1. 2.* never one singular church of Galatia; likewise plurally the churches of Judea, *Gal. 1. 21. 1 Thes. 2. 14.* and of Macedonia, *2 Cor. 8. 1.* and of Asia, *1 Cor. 16. 19.* Never find we one church generally in any of these Provinces.

It is objected, that the church of Cenchrea was a Parish subordinate to the church of Corinth; but this saith he pag. 30. is easily proved to be false. Paul calleth it a church properly, and not by the figure Synchdoche, as signifying a part of a church, and not a whole

whole church, there is no cause of *Pauls* figurative speaking in this place, &c.

S E C T. I V.

The same Author hath writ a whole Book more of this subject, and stileth it *An Attestation of many Learned Godly and famous Divines*, &c. justifying this Doctrine, that the church Government ought to be alwaies with the peoples free consent, as also that, that a true church under the Gospel containeth no more ordinary congregations then one. In his first chapter he sheweth the great importance of the matter there handled, viz. that the people ought to have their free consent in their own church Government; in the third chapter he produceth the Testimonies of *Beza*, *Calvin*, *Viret*, *Zuinglius*, *Luther*, *Bucer*, *Peter Martyr*, *Musculus*, *Bullinger*, *Gualter*, *Ursin*, *Dancus*, *Tilenus*, *Junius*, *Piscator*, *Ghemnitius*, *Whitaker*, consenting with him; In the fourth chapter he sheweth that the confession of the Bohemian churches, the Helvetian Confession, the Genevian Liturgy, the French Liturgy, the publick order set forth in the Low Countreys, the Synod of Tilleburgh in Nassovia 1582. the churches under the Paulsgrave, yea, the churches which follow Luther do consent with him. In the fifth chapter he produceth the Testimonies of the best Antiquity after the New Testament herein consenting with him out of *Eusebius*, *Cyprian*, the *Nicene* council, the council of *Carthage*, of *Constantinople*, &c. In the sixth chapter he shewes that *Dr. Bilson*, and *Dr. Downame* acknowledg this truth; in the seventh chapter he enumerateth the consequences of greatest concerns that follow upon the peoples free consent in their church Government.

As if it be the Ordinance of Christ, and practise of the Apostles that the church Government ought alwaies to be with the peoples free consent, then first it followeth that every true church is one ordinary congregation onely, all the people cannot possibly by any means give their free consent in the ordinary church Government (neither can any person take it of all them) justly, orderly, and conveniently, in a church so large as a Diocesan, much less as a Province, or a Nation, and least of all so large as a Universal church, &c.

Secondly, It followeth that such Synods or Presbyterians cannot be approved, which rule imperiously over the congregations, and impose on them (whether they will or no) their Acts and Canons under some spiritual penalty, as excommunication, suspension, deprivation, degradation, from the Ministry, &c.!

Thirdly, It followeth that Lord Bishops are in several things unlawful

lawful and contrary to Christ; now a Lord Bishop and a spiritual Lord we alwaies understand him to be, who exerciseth sole authority spiritual, or sole Government Ecclesiastical, yea, though over but one congregation, much more, &c. Also sole Authority spiritual and sole Government Ecclesiastical we call that which is exercised without the Christian peoples free consent, &c. it would be too much to name the rest of his consequences or the head of the remaining part of his Book, and therefore I shall transcribe no more out of Mr. *Jacobs* pieces, who writ also in those daies against Mr. *Johnson* for leparation.

S E C T. V.

The Author of the answer to Dr. *Downams* Sermon, saith p. 60. That he is out of all doubt that for the substance of it Mr. *Jacobs* Assertion is true, that in the first two hundred years all the Christians in any one great city did make but one particular ordinary congregation, assembled in one place; and in pag. 66, 67, &c. he proveth that the churches of *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, *Antioch* (being visible churches indued with power of Ecclesiastical Government) were each of them but one Parish; First, the whole Church therein ordinarily assembled in one place 1 *Cor.* 11. 18, 20, 23. and 14. 23, 24, 25. to the service of God. Secondly, the church of *Cenchrea* being the part of *Corinth* (*Strab.* l. 8.) was a distinct congregation from that of *Cor.* 16. *Rom.* 1. Thirdly, add hereunto the Testimony of *Eusebius*, who (*Eccles. Hist.* l. 4. cap. 22.) calleth the church of *Corinth* the Parish or congregation of *Corinth*, and of our own church Bible, printed 1566. where 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. is translated unto the congregation which is at *Corinth*, of *Ephesus*, (if any make question) the Apostle calleth the church there a flock. *Acts* 20. 18. not flocks, and what is a flock but one congregation? Secondly, add hereunto Testimonies old and new. *Ignatius* a disciple of the Apostle *John* in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, witnesseth, that the church of *Ephesus* in his time came together into one place for the receiving of the Sacrament; *Timothy* (saith *Eusebius* l. 3. c. 4.) was Bishop of the Parish of *Ephesus*, whereas whereever that Ecclesiastical writer speaketh of the Christians in a Province for the first two hundred years, he calleth the company of them Parishes or Churches, as the Parishes of *Crete* l. 4. 22. the Churches of *Crete*, l. 3. 4. and so of *Pontus*, l. 4. 22.

Tindal that worthy Martyr conceived thus also of the Church of *Ephesus*, and the other six in the Revelation translating and maintaining against Sr. *Thomas Moores* Dialogue, p. 250. the translation of the word ἐκκλησία by Congregation, thus to the Angel of the Con-

Congregation at *Ephesus*, &c. With all affirming, that a Bishop was the Governour but of one Congregation, and the overseer but of a Parish, *Obed. of a Christ. p. 135.* *John Bale* an exile for the truth so translateth and expoundeth the word Candlestick and Church by Congregation, *Imag. of both chur. Rev. 1. 20. and 2. 1, &c.* So *Dr. Fulke* in answer to the *Rhemish Annot. on Ephes. 5. 2.* Thus *Mr. Perkins* on *Rev. 2. 3.* affirmeth, that these seven Churches were particular Congregations, and that every particular Congregation is a Church, and hath priviledges of a Church belonging to it. The great Church Bible affirmeth as much, reading *Rev. 1. 4.* thus, *John* to the seven Congregations which are in *Asia.* Yea, *Dr. Bilson* telleth the *Seminaries*, part. 2. pag. 170. that the Church is never taken in the Old or New Testament for the Priests alone, but for the Congregation of the Faithful, and namely in *Acts 20. 28.* of *Antioch*, we may read *Acts 14. 27.* how *Paul* and *Barnabas* gathered the church together.

Ignatius being afterward the Bishop or Pastor there, and in bonds for the Gospel, maketh it plain, that in his time that church stood but of one congregation, for in his Epistle to *Hecon* he calleth it a Synagogue, a Parish, a Flock, which with no reason can be understood of more Parishes then one, yea, *Eusebius* so calleth it long after him.

S E C T. VI.

The same Author in his second part of his reply to *Dr. Downams* defence, wipes off all the exceptions that the Doctor makes both against the assertion in general and against the particulars; touching the Church of *Corinth*, the Doctor saith the thing that is testified for it. *1 Cor. 11. 18. 20. 33.* Is such as might be written to the church of *England*; but pag. 78. saith the replier, can it be affirmed of all the people professing the Gospel in *England*, that they come (or for their numbers may come) together, *Εν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ*, in one church or into one place, to eat the Lord Supper? But the words of the Apostle (verse 18. 20. 33.) do by consequence imply that the faithful which then were members of the church in *Corinth* (to whom he writteth) came together in one church assembly, and into one place (or at least for their number might and duty ought so to assemble together) to eat the Lords Supper; compare the tenor of the Apostles words *συνερχόμενων ὑμῶν*, &c. v. 18. 20. With the like phrase of speech, *1 Cor. 5. 4. συναχθέντων ὑμῶν*, and *Math. 21. 34. 41. and 27. 17. Acts 20. 7. 8. and 25. 17. and 28. 17. συνεγμένων vel συνεληθόντων*, &c. it will appear that a concourse into one place for one work is imported

ported by the very word *συνέρχονται* though it had no other words annexed to inforce that construction; neither can any one instance be given, where it noteth such a distribution into many several Societies, as must be implied in it, if it should be applied to the Church of England, which cannot possibly be gathered into one place for the celebration of the Lord Supper. But why doth the Doctor bury in silence that other Testimony, *1 Cor. 14. 23*? *Εάν ὅν συνέλθῃ ἡ ἐκκλησία ὅλη ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ*. Doubtless his own conscience told, the simplest of his readers would have discerned that he had spoken against common sense, if he should have said that the like might have been affirmed of the church of England, *viz.* that the whole church cometh together into one place.

S E C T. VII.

The Authors of the Christian and Modest offer of a most indifferent conference or Disputation about the main and principle Controversies betwixt the Prelates and the late silenced and deprived Ministers in England divide their Book into four parts; the first whereof is,

*Some of the silenced and deprived Ministers,
Printed A. 1606*

The Propositions which the Ministers offer to maintain against the Prelates.

1. All matters meerly Ecclesiastical which are lawfully imposed upon any church are such as may be concluded necessarily from the written word of God.
2. All Humane ordinances used onely or specially in Gods worship whereunto they are not necessary of themselves are simply unlawful.
3. Every true visible church of Christ is such a spiritual body politick, as is specially instituted by Christ or his Apostles in the New Testament.
4. There is no true visible church of Christ but a particular ordinary congregation onely.
5. Every true visible church of Christ or ordinary assembly of the faithful hath by Christs Ordinance, power in it self immediately under Christ, to elect and ordain, deprive and depose their Ministers, and to execute all other Ecclesiastical censures.
6. The Pastor of a particular congregation is the highest ordinary Ecclesiastical officer in any true constituted visible church of Christ

7. It is the office of every true Pastor to teach and to govern spiritually onely one church or congregation immediately under Christ.

8. The Pastor alone ought not to exercise Ecclesiastical jurisdiction over his church, but others ought to be joined in commission with him by the assignment of the same church; neither ought he and they to perform any main and material Ecclesiastical act without the free consent of the congregation.

The other eight Propositions peculiarly relate to their times, and therefore I shall not transcribe them.

S E C T. VIII.

The Author of the discourse of the Abuses then in question in the churches of Christ, &c. makes it his business to shew how they are spoken against not onely by the Scriptures, but also by the Antient Fathers as long as there remained any face of a true church, and likewise by the lights of the

Mr. T. Whetenhill,
Printed Anno
1606.

Gospel & blessed Martyrs in the midst of the Antichristian darkness.

Pag. 3. He quotes these words out of Mr. Fox Acts and Mon. pag. 365. speaking of the primitive churches, it is evident to all men that have eyes in their heads, &c. that there was not then any mother church above other churches, but the whole universal church was the mother church, under which universal church in general were comprehended all other particular churches in special, as sister churches together, not one greater then another but all in like equality, &c.

Pag. 76, 77, 78. He transcribes these words out of Zuinglius in Act. 8. expl. There hath been contention from these many ages to our times, what a Church is? which verily hath risen from a desire of bearing rule, for some men have arrogated this unto themselves, to say that they are the Church, that all things might be ordered by their hands: But omitting the devices of men, &c.

A multis jam seculis ad nostra usque tempora quæ sit Ecclesiæ certamen fuit, ortum nimirum ex regnandi cupiditate, &c.

A Church I find is taken two waies in Scripture. First, for the company of all those who in a sure and firm Faith do believe in Christ their onely head; this is scattered through the universal world; who knows this church? onely God. But what shall we say of the Pope, Cardinals and Bishops, which come together in a council, are not they also the Church? I answer, they are onely members of this Church, if so be they believe in Christ and acknowledg him for their

their head. If they believe not they belong not to the Church all, so far off is it that they should be the Church. But thou wilt say they are a Church representative; of this I find nothing in Holy Scripture. 2. A Church is taken for the several Congregations which conveniently meet together in some one place for the hearing of the word and receiving of the Sacraments, these are called from the Greeks Parishes: of this manner of a Church Christ speaketh, *Matth.* 18. saying, Tell the Church; and so *Paul* useth the name of the Church, *1 Cor.* 1. To the Church which is at *Corinth*, &c. And afterward, what do I hear?

May a Bishop alone excommunicate? I had thought, that had been appointed to the Church, &c. Christ said not, we should refuse the company of a man when he had contemned an admonition or twain (therefore one onely man cannot excommunicate) but then at the last, when he had despised the admonition of the Church, therefore no man but that Church can excommunicate, wherein he dwelleth by his sin hath offended; unto the Church and Pastor belongeth this right of pronouncing sentence of excommunication against the offender. And again, *Art.*

31. They hold (saith he) that the excommunication by the Bishop is the Churches excommunication, but those things are to be observed (which before we have spoken in *Art.* 8,) that the Church in the Scriptures is either taken for all Christians which upon the earth do never visibly meet together, which are onely known to God, &c. or else it is taken for every particular Church, which they call Parishes: therefore the conventicle of these disguised Bishops cannot be comprehended under the name of the Church, &c. therefore it is clear, that they be not the church unto which the offending sinner ought to be shewed; for it is manifest, Christ doth not bid us go tell the universal Church (for this Church never meets together bodily, &c.) therefore it cannot be taken none other wise but that Christ commandeth the offender to be judged by the Church which we call Parish, pag. 29, 30. he saith, These are the words of *Peter Martyr* in loc. com. p. 4. ch. 5. sect. 9. & in com. in *1 Cor.* 5. concerning the Government of the church, if thou respect Christ it shall be called a Monarchy for he is our King, &c. and there be in the church which do rule as Bishops, Elders, Doctors, in respect of whom it may be called a Government of many, &c. but because in the church there be matters of very great weight and importance referred to the people (as appeareth in the Acts of the A-

Quid audio?
Episcopus ne
solus excommu-
nicare potest?
putabam Eccle-
siae esse datam,
&c.

Tradunt excom-
municationem ab
Episcopo datam
Ecclesiae esse ex-
communicationem,
&c.

postles)

postles) therefore it hath a consideration of popular Government ; but of the most weight are accounted excommunication, absolution, chusing of Ministers and such like ; so as its concluded that no man can be excommunicated without the consent of the Church ; and after he saith, that *Cyprian* writ unto *Cornelius* the Bishop of *Rome*, that he laboured much with the people that they which are fallen might have pardon , which if it might have been given by himself , there had been no need , that he should so greatly have travelled in perswading the people. And *Augustine* against the *Donatists* sheweth the same, when he saith, We must then cease to excommunicate if the whole people shall be infected with one and the same vice , for it will not (saith he) consent to the excommunication, but will defend and maintain him whom thou shalt excommunicate : The definition *Peter Martyr* giveth of excommunication is this, Excommunication is the casting out of a notorious wicked man from the fellowship of the Faithful by the judgment of them that be chief, and the whole Church consenting, by the Authority of Christ, and rule of the Holy Scriptures, to the Salvation of him that is cast out, and of the people of God.

Pag. 128. He alledgeth these words out of *Beza* upon those words of the Apostle in the Second Epistle to *Corinths* , Wherefore I pray you that you would confirm your love to him ; where the A-

Publico Ecclesie consensu.

postle speaks of restoring again the excommunicated person, viz. by a common or general consent of the church declare that you receive him again as a brother as by a common judgment of the Church he was cast out. And in his 83. Ep. (saith my Author) after long debating the question of the Churches right in Church Government and namely in election of their Ministers , at last he resolveth thus , Nothing may be obtruded and imposed on the people being unwilling, *in vito populo nihil obtrudatur.*

Pag. 140, 141. He tells us that that blessed Martyr of God, Mr. *Tindall* (discouring in his answer to Sir *Th. Moores* Dialogue p. 250.) of the words [Church and Congregation] used in the translation of the New Testament) saith, Wherefore inasmuch as the Clergy (as the nature of those hard and indurate Adamant stones is to draw all to them) had appropriated to themselves the term that of right is common to all the whole Congregation of them that believe in Christ ; and with their false and subtil wiles had beguiled the people, and brought them into the ignorance of the Word, &c. Therefore in the Translation of the New Testament where I found this word *ἐκκλησία*, I translated it by this word, Congregation, &c. And p. 142. he addeth the words of D. *Fulk* in his answer to the *Rhemish* Testament on Ephes. 5. §. 2. viz. By this it is manifest that the

Transla-

Translator understood congregation, which expresseth the Greek word better then church to avoid ambiguity, because this word church is commonly taken for the house of the assembly of christians. And that the people might know that the church is a gathering together of all the members into one body, which in the name of the church doth not appear, &c.

Page 150, 151. He acquaints us, that the famous Martyr Mr. Hooper in his Apology against them that accused him to be a maintainer of such as cursed *Q Mary* (which Apology was set forth and allowed according to the order appointed in *Q Elizabeths* injunctions) hath these words, If they knew Gods laws. (as they do not indeed) they should see and find that no ordinary excommunication should be used by the Bishop alone, but by the Bishop and all the whole parish, &c. Also when the incestuous man was excommunicated, *S. Paul* alone did not excommunicate him, but *S. Pauls* consent and the whole church with him.

S E C T. IX.

The Authors of the Humble Supplication to *K. James* have these words, p. 13. 14. As we hold that your Majesty within your dominions hath power to call Synods and to dissolve them; so we hold likewise that ruling Synods, and united Presbyteries, exercising Government and imposing Laws and decrees upon several churches, and the Pastors of them, are not only humane institutions, but in regard of the said Government and Authority of imposing laws, altogether unlawful and usurping upon the supremacy of the civil Magistrate, &c. And therefore they are not desired by us, as a mean either to curb and force the civil Magistrate, (a course abhorred by us, and utterly repugnant to our profession and practice) or to procure countenance and respect to our Ministerial function amongst others: We acknowledge no other power and authority for the overseeing, ruling, and censuring particular churches (how many soever in number) in the case of their misgovernment then that which is Originally invested in your Royal person, and from it derived to such of your laity, as you shall judge worthy to be deputed to the execution of the same under you, so that the favour humbly Solicited by us, is, that whereas our Lord Jesus hath given to each particular church or ordinary congregation, this right and priviledg, viz. to elect, ordain and deprive her own Ministers and to exercise all other parts of lawful Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction under him; your Majesty would be pleased to take order as well that each particular church that shall be allowed,

Some of the Silenced and Deprived Ministers. Printed Anno 1609.

to partake in the benefit of the said tolleration, may have, enjoy and put in execution, and practise this her said right and priviledg; as that some, your, subaltern civil officers may be appointed by you to demand and receive of each church a due and just account of their proceeding; here we humbly intreat that we may not be so interpreted, as if we disclaimed all sort of Synods. It is the ruling and not the deliberative and perswasive Synods which we except against: that a Synod should enjoin us to receive and entertain a constitution enacted by themselves we hold it unlawful; to be moved thereto by way of perswasion grounded upon a clear demonstration of utility, and advantage growing thereby to the churches we do in no sort dislike.

And pag. 18, 19. they thus express themselves: We neither hold in opinion nor practise any matter either prejudicial to your Royal State Supremacy and prerogatives (as our adversaries do) or partaking of confusion growing from the root of that accursed parity, which incountereth the subordination of officers, which we agreeably to the word of truth do maintain to be of as necessary and worthy use in the body of Christ as in a body natural, in which all members are not eyes, or heads, or hands, but one is head, another is hand, &c. so in the body of Christ one is Pastor, another Teacher, others Elders, &c. and yet we disclaim not such equality as betwixt distinct and separate churches, the Spirit of all wisdom hath instituted and recommended; it being in them as they are with respect of the one to the other, considered, no more and in congruity or disproportion then parity in eminency and power betwixt the severall Kings and Kingdoms of Europe, &c.

S E C T. X.

The Authors of the Confession and Protestation, &c. make this the fourth Article of their Faith, viz. We believe
Printed A^o. that the nature and essence of Christs true visible
 1616. (that is political) church under the Gospel is a free congregation of Christians for the service of God, or a true spiritual body politick containing no more ordinary congregations but one, and that Independent: wherein chiefly two pointes are to be noted; first, that a true visible political church under the Gospel is but one ordinary congregation, and this is to be seen plainly in these Scriptures, *Matth.* 18. 17. *1 Cor.* 5. 4, 12, 13. *1 Cor.* 11. 18, 20. *1 Cor.* 14. 23. *Acts* 1. 15. *Acts* 2. 1, 5, 4. *Acts* 6. 2, 3, 5, 6. *Acts* 15. 22, 25. *Acts* 14. 23, 27. *Acts* 15. 30. *Acts* 10. 28. *Gal.* 1. 2, 11. *2 Cor.* 8. 1. *Rom.* 16. 1, &c. Secondly, That by Gods Ordinance, this one ordinary congregation of Christians is a spiritual

ritual body politick, and so is a free congregation independent; that is, it hath from God the right and power of spiritual administration and government in it self, by the common and free consent of the people independently and immediately under Christ, always in the best order they can, which these places do prove, *Mat.* 18. 17. 19. *1 Cor.* 5. 12. 13. & 10. 15. & 7. 23. *2 Cor.* 2. 8. *2 Thes.* 3. 6. 14. *Acts* 6. 3, 5, 6. *Acts* 14. 23. *Acts* 1. 23. 26. *Acts* 15. 22, 25. *1 Thes.* 5. 21. *1 John* 4. 1. *Rom.* 16. 17. *Col.* 4. 17. *Gal.* 1. 9. & 5. 1. & 4. 26. The thirteenth Article of their faith is this, *viz.* We believe the true administery, the holy censures to be by the Congregations consent only.

S E C T. X I.

The Authors of the collection of sundry matters, tending to prove it necessary for all persons, actually to walk in the use and practise of the substantial Ordinances in the gospel appointed by God for his visible church, spiritually political lay this down for the first argument: Those which are essential parts of a visible political church, and are delivered to us by Christ and his Apostles, constantly in the gospel, yea in many places, by way of commandment indefinitely, that is without respect of any special persons, places or times, they are Christs perpetual and substantial ordinances, for his visible political church under the gospel, and ought perpetually to be observed and used by all christians, so it be in the best order they can: But a free congregation of visible christians are the essential parts of a visible political church, and the same are delivered to us by Christ and his Apostles, constantly in the gospel; yea, and in many places by way of commandment indefinitely, which is clear; thus the essential parts of every thing, are the matter and the proper essential form thereof; now a free congregation of visible christians expresseth both these for a visible political church under the gospel; visible christians is the matter, *viz.* one ordinary congregation of them; and [Free] expresseth the proper essential form in the same, that is one ordinary congregation (and no more) having power in it self (by the free consent of the members thereof) to administer all their spiritual affairs and government, setteth down the whole nature of this church; and both these are so delivered to us, for one ordinary congregation, *Mat.* 18. 17, 19, 20. *1 Cor.* 14. 23. *Act* 2. 44. & 6. 2. & 15. 22, 25, & 20. 28. & 14. 27. & 15. 30. *Rom.* 16. 1. To be free, *Mat.* 18. 17. *1 Cor.* 3. 12, 13. *2 Thes.* 3. 14. *Rom.* 16. 17. *1 Thes.* 5. 21. *1 John* 4. 1.

S E C T. XII.

The author of the *Diocessan* trial, &c. makes this his first question; Whether Christ did institute or the Apostles frame, any *Diocessan* form of churches,

Mr. Paul Bain,
Printed Anno.
1621.

or parished only; in the opening of the terms, he tells us, p. 11. 12. that the word church is not to be understood figuratively, either metonymically for the place or Synecdoche; for ministers administering Ordinances, but properly for a body politick, standing of people to be taught and governed, and of teachers and governor, &c.

A parished church may be considered materially or formally, materially as it is a church within such local bounds; the members whereof dwell contiguously, one bordering upon the other; this God instituted not, for it is accidental to the church, may *Abesse* and *Adesse*, a church remaining one, if a parished church in London should dwell as the Dutch do, one far enough from the other, while the same believers were united with the same governors, the church were not changed; though the place were altered; formally it is put for a multitude; which do in manner of a parish ordinarily congregate such churches, and such only we say, God directed, and again p. 13. we affirm, that all churches were singular congregations equal independent, each of other in regard of subjection.

In p. 4 &c. he mustereth those forces which oppose diocessan churches, allowing only such churches to be instituted by Christ, which may meet in one congregation only; first, the word which without some modification superadded, doth signify only such a company, as called forth, may assemble politically, that word being alone doth signify such a church, as may to holy purposes, ordinarily meet alone. But the word, Church, which Christ and his Apostles did institute, is used indefinitely, and signifieth no more, *ergo ubi lex non distinguit, non est distinguendum.*

Secondly, The Scripture speaketh of the churches in a Kingdome or Province alwayes in the plural number, without any note of difference, as equal one with the other, *ergo.*

Thirdly, The churches the Apostles planted were such as might and did congregate, as appears by Example, that of Jerusalem, though there were in it toward five hundred Synagogues, yet the christian church was but one, and such as did congregate into one place ordinarily. After the access of five thousand to it, *Acts. 2. 46. & 5. 12. & 6. 1. & 15. 25. & 21. 22. & 25. 22.* their ordinary meeting (as it is, *Acts 2. 46. daily*) could not be a panegirical meeting, &c.

&c. the millions of believers here (by accident of a circumstance haply the p[as]sover) had not a settled state there, there were set number: Yea, it is likely they were, and continued but one congregation for forty yeare after; they were not so great a multitude, but that *Pella*, like to the *Zoar* of *Lot*, a little town could receive them, &c. The church of *Corinth* was but one congregation, which did for the service of God, or exercise of discipline meet together, 1 *Cor.* 5.4. 1 *Cor.* 14.25,26. 1 *Cor.* 11.12,23. *In uno et eodem loco*; the whole church which was guilty of a sinner, uncast forth could not be a *diocesan* church, neither can the word *συνερχαδς* (coming together) ever be shewed to signifie any thing else besides one particular assembly, be instanteth also in the church of *Antioch*, *Ephesus*, &c.

Fourthly, He giveth us example Ecclesiastical, out of *Ignatius*, *Justine*, *Irenaus*, *Tertullian*, *Eusebius*, &c. p. 13.14,15. &c. he answereth objections to the contrary, whereas it was ledged, that those that use city by city, and church by church, are equivalent (which the Apostles do) they ordained that city and Suburbs and country should make one *diocesan* church. He answereth, that the true meaning of the Apostle, is this, he placed Presbyters *καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων* lest we should understand it of the multitude and local bounds, it is said, that they placed them *καὶ ἐκ καθολικῆς* church by church, because Presbyters, were not givers but to Disciples and Christians, now converted out of the multitude and local limits, wherewith cities were bounded; besides there is an adequate acception of these phrases *per accidens*, not because the city and church, was to make but one church, but because the christians, by occasion of their number, not being then too great, were framed into one church, or because by occasion there was yet but one church, not because there was to be but one. And whereas it was objected concerning the church of *Jerusalem*, that it was more numbersome then could meet parishionally, first, by growing to three thousand, *Acts* 2.41. then to five thousand, *Acts* 4.4. then to have millions in it, *Acts* 21.20. he answereth; p. 15.16. that they did meet ordinarily as before he had proved, and in that deliberation, about which the church of *Antioch* did send to them, *Irenaus* affirmeth, l. 3. c. 12. *universam eam convenisse*, *Luke* affirmeth the same; as for that of millions of believers, it is certain they were not fixed members of this church, for would *Luke* who reckoneth the growth of them to five thousand have concealed so notable accessions, whereby they say they grew up to I know not how many thousands? &c. nevertheless say they were more then could sitly meet, yet might they be tolerated as in one congregation, the Apostles seeing such times to ensue, wherein many of them should translate themselves, and be dispersed

dispersed hither and thither: God suffering it a while to grow more rank and abundant than ordinary churches are to be, because it was *Ecceſſa Sircularis*, many of whose branches were to be transplanted in their time; yea, we read of some ordinary auditories spoke to by ordinary pastors, as great as that, having therein five thousand settled members, *Chrysostom* on *Mat.* doth signifie to his esteem they might be five thousand that then heard his voice.

And whereas it was objected, that the church of *Corinth* was a *Metropolitan* Church, because the Apostle writing to the church of *Corinth* writes to all the Saints in *Achaia*, *2 Cor.* 1. 1. Implying that they were all subordinate to that church, because he sautes jointly the *Corinthians* and *Achaians*, and calleth the Church of *Corinth Achaia*, *2 Cor.* 9. 2. & 11. 8, 9, 10. he answereth, p. 16. That the naming the rest of *Achaia* with them doth no more signifie their subjection of all *Achaians*, then in *1 Cor.* 1. 2 naming all saints in every place doth signifie their subjection.

Besides he speaketh not of all *Achaia* as one church, but as diverse churches in one province, and yet if he had spoken of the churches as one, he might not imply a *Metropolitan* Church, for we may speak of things not only as they are really in themselves, but according to any respect of reason, under which they are apprehended.

And whereas it was objected, That that respect which many congregations distinct, may have now assembled in one place, that they may have severed in many places, for the unity of the place is but extrinſick to the unity of the congregation; but many distinct congregations gathered in one city, may make one church, as in the *Netherlands*. He answereth, p. 21. by denying the proposition, for we cannot reason thus: If many masters and distinct forms of Scholars in one free Schoole, be but one free School, then many Masters and company of Scholars severed in many Schooles, are but one Schoole, &c.

And whereas it was objected, That if many churches may make one by subjecting themselves to the government of one Presbytery, then they may make one by subjecting themselves to a Bishop and cathedral consistory: but the twenty four churches of *Geneva*, and the territories belonging to it, do subject themselves to the government of one presbytery, and so make one church, &c. he answereth, p. 21. to the proposition, by distinguishing those who subject themselves to a Presbytery, as not having power of governing themselves within themselves, as being under it by subordination.

These may in effect as well be subject to a consistory, but thus the twenty four churches of *Geneva* do not do; they have power of governing themselves &c. *Geneva* made this consociation not as if the prime churches were imperfect, and to make one Church by this union, &c.

The

The Publisher of this Book of Mr. Baines, viz. Dr. Ames in his Preface, saith, that in this first Question Mr. Baines maintaineth against his Adversaries a course not unlike to that which *Am-machanus* in the dayes of King *Edward* the third, contended for against the begging Fryars, in his Book called the Defence of Curates: for when those Fryars incroached upon the Priviledges of Parochial Ministers, he withstood them upon these grounds, *Ecclesia Parochialis juxta verba Moysi, Deut. 12. Est locus electus adeo in quo debemus accipere cuncta quæ præcipit dominus ex Sacramentis; Parochus est ordinarius Parochiani est persona adeo præcepta vel mandato Dei ad illud Ministerium expendum electa.* Which if they be granted, our adversaries cause may go a begging with the afore-said Fryars.

The same Author, in answer to the third Question, in his book saith, p. 79, 80. in *Matth. 18. Mark, 1.* Christ doth presuppose, the Authority of every particular Church taken in distinctly, for it is such a Church, as any brother offended may presently complain to, therefore no Universal, Provincial, or Diocesan Church gathered in a Council. 2. It is not any particular Church (definite) that he doth send all Christians to, for then all Christians in the world should come to one particular church were it possible; he doth therefore presuppose indistinctly the very particular church where the brother offended and offending be members; And if they be not both of one Church, the Plaintiff must make his denunciation to the Church where the Defendant is. *quia forum sequitur reum; &c.* and pag. 81. he proves, that the power of Ecclesiastical censures was in the particular Church of *Corinth*, for first *Paul* doth rebuke them that they had not set themselves to cast him forth, now (as *Ambrose* saith on the place) *Si autem quis potestatem non habet quem scit reum abjicere, aut probare non valet, immunis est.* Secondly, *Paul* doth wish them assembled together with himself in the Name and Virtue of Christ, that they might deliver him up to Satan, he doth not call on them to restrain him as already excommunicated, but to purge him out as infectious leaven yet among them. Thirdly, *Paul* doth tell them that they had power to judge those within, those, who are called Brethren, and lived otherwise. Lastly, *Paul* doth attribute power to them to forgive him, which would not have been in them, had not they had the power to excommunicate: such as have no power to bind have no power to loose: and though he holds that the ordinary power with the execution thereof is not given to the Community of the Church, or the whole multitude of the faithful, pag. 80, 83. but to the Officers of every particular Congregation, yet pag. 84. he saith, that such estate by Christ her husband was put upon her, that all power is

to be executed in such a manner as standeth with respect to her excellency ; hence it is that Governours are in many things of great Moment, to take the consent of the people with them, because they sustain the person of the Spouse of Christ, and therefore cannot be otherwise dealt with, without open dishonour in such things which belong in common to the whole Congregation.

POST-



POSTSCRIPT.

R E A D E R,

BY this time I suppose thou art well nigh tired, yet such affection do I bare to Mr. *Stuncley*, that I cannot but give thee his Apology, occasioned by the lies, and defamations of many, as I took it from his mouth the fourteenth of this instant that so thou maist not harbour unjust prejudices against him. His text was in *Matth.* 18. 15, 16, 17. verses. In the close of his Sermon his words were these :

This may be some Apology for what was lately practised by some of us. There were (I confess) two persons, that we threw out of our Congregation on Monday last. The reason of their Rejection was for their refusing private and publick Amonitions, for scandalous sins, wherewith they were charged: And therefore we thought, and do still to this day (the shame and reproach of this place have not altered our thoughts in this thing) we did (I say) and do believe still that we proceed by the righteous Lawes of Jesus Christ, and that we had lived in sin, had we neglected that sentence.

Obj. Perhaps you will say there are as great sins as lying, and disobedience (for those were the two great sins of those two excommunicates) to be found amongst

mongst us ; that yet are not censured.

Ans. 1. I bleſs God I know none ſuch now in our **Assembly** ; there may be ſecret wickedneſs ; but *de occultis non judicat Eccleſia*. This I ſhall ſay, if we know more ſuch offenders, by the grace of God we ſhall ſo proceed upon them. And for a tryal if any of you have any thing to lay as a charge againſt any perſon related to us, do but obſerve the rule, that Chriſt hath appointed, of private Admonition, and then more publick, and ſee whether there ſhall not be impartial proceeding againſt them : if not, then condemn us of partiality.

Ans. 2. But if there be ſuch ſins not ſo puniſhed in other Congregations, I ſay this to that, if there be, the more is the pity. The Lord telleth you to day what ought to be done, not what men will do with offenders.

Obj. But you will ſay, this is to do, as the Biſhops did, they did excommunicate.

Ans. I anſwer, wherein the Biſhops walked by the rule of Chriſt, therein you ought to imitate them.

Obj. But this Ordinance hath been diſuſed a long time.

Ans. It hath been once practiſed already in this place, and there was no noiſe of it ; it was practiſed on a *Quaker* : and then it was liked, or at leaſt connived at, at leaſt no perſon ever diſcharged duty to me, to ſay it was a wrong censure : Therefore I fear there is ſomewhat of intereſt that lyeth in the bottom of the clamours of the people.

But if it hath been diſuſed, ſhall it ſtill be neglected ? The longer it hath been diſuſed, the more reaſon we have to take it up. The feaſt of Tabernacles was neglected for hundreds of years ; yet it was taken up with all its formalities, *Neh. 8. 16, 17.* So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themſelves booths,

booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water-gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. And all the Congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity, made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the daies of Joshua the son of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Israel done so; and there was very great gladness. Shall we lay aside all the Ordinances of Heaven, because for some time out of date? for a hundred years since preaching was hardly in use; and yet that had been a sorry Apology for a dumb Ministry.

Obj. But you excommunicate people for hearing Godly Ministers; that is a common report, that runs through the City, and is carried into the Countrey, if not as far as London.

Ans^w. That is a mistake, and a lye that deserveth censure, the consciences of the lyars that got in amongst us that day (for the doores stood open) will bare witness to the contrary; the persons excommunicated were censured for lying, disorderly walking, and neglecting Church admonition.

Obj. But the great out-cry is that we did not barely excommunicate them, but we did deliver them to Satan, to the Devil; this is accounted a very great act of cruelty, they account us as Jewes, and I know not what, for delivering them over to Satan.

Ans^w. My Brethren, I beseech you do not flight the Ordinances of Heaven; Remember 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. There the Church is commanded to deliver the excommunicate to Satan: there we have a warrant for that dayes action.

Obj. But it is the opinion of some Ministers that that kind of excommunication is ceased.

Ans^w. For my part I know not a Minister in England (I know none) but is of this mind, that that delivery

very to Satan is excommunication. If you look to the large Annotations, they speak it out of excommunication. If you will believe the Dutch Annotations penned by some of the chiefeſt men that the Synod of *Dort* could pick out, they are of that opinion, and ſeveral others, that I could name. The queſtion being asked in the *Synopſis pur. Theol.* whether any thing was peculiar to the Apoſtle in delivering to Satan, they deny it againſt the Socinians and others. *Diſp. 42. Corol. 4.* nay, Mr. *Gilleſpy*, as great a Scholler (I think) as ever Scotland bred, affirmeth, (hear his words) He that is excommunicated may be truly ſaid to be delivered to Satan, for he that is caſt out of the Church, on whom the Kingdom of Heaven is ſhut, whom neither Chriſt, nor his Church doth own, is delivered to Satan who reigneth without the Church: And ſurely it muſt needs be a Church act: and he giveth reaſons for it (and have they not weight in them?) Firſt, the Apoſtle blaſmeth the Church for not doing it. Secondly, it was a cenſure inflicted by many, 2 *Cor. 2. 6.* and therefore no Apoſtolicall Act. And thirdly, the grounds, and reaſons on which the church was to proceed againſt that party, were not applicable to thoſe times onely, but to our times. *Peter Martyr*, *Parent* and *Baſil* are of that mind. *Baſil* ſpeaketh of ſome delivered to Satan for thirty years together, that they might learn not to carry themſelves filthily, yea, unnaturally, as formerly they had done.

Obj. But (ſay ſome) and this is the weightieſt Objection, you are not contented to excommunicate them, but you curſed them, when you excommunicated them; you had ſuch paſſages in your prayer that day, that God would be pleaſed to curſe their children, and their eſtates, and to curſe their praying and their hearing hours; nay (ſaith one) you prayed that theſe perſons might lye under the everlaſting flames of Gods wrath;

nay,

say, you said, that you had banished God from them, which is blasphemy.

An. This is language I have heard very many times; this week many such passages are handed from one to another, among the people of this place, that would fain be accounted a professing people. But my brethren let me speak my mind freely to you. I have indeed heard and seen, though not read, a paper flying up and down this City, I think it is gon as far as London, that is full of notorious lies: And all this I have brought in as objected against me, is abominably false; notoriously false: I did not at all pray that God would curse them, God forbid, I hope God gave in more tenderness, more bowels of compassion that day, then to do such a piece of wickedness. Besides I should have crossed my Text; seeing therein the primary end of excommunication is declared to be for the destruction of the flesh that the soul might be saved. Now for me to beg that God would curse them in their children, and all those things, who is able to imagine me guilty of so much folly, and wickedness? But I see plainly what a people in *Exeter* will believe against me: here lay the mistake, I must confess I endeavoured with the people, then convened for that end, to mourn over those persons, and that we might be affected with their condition, amongst other passages, likely I might have these, in declaring what a dreadful sentence, excommunication was, that all things were accursed to them, and the influences of heaven were withheld, and to be withheld, till by shame they be brought to return. Thus have I been traduced, and the designe is to beget a prejudice in my hearers, that they may have no benefit by my preaching, though blessed be God, yet the designe is disappointed: so far was I from begging, that they should lie under everlasting flame, that I remember, I had such passages, that our bed-sides and closets might witness to our prayers

prayers for the destruction of the flesh, and saving of the soul. Therefore this is a very great wrong that is done me, to spread up and down, that they can never recall; I beseech you, give not credit to every libellous paper, and every report that cometh to you, I know I am a man subject to like infirmities with your selves: But if in any thing I have offended God, or man, I am ready whilst I live to give satisfaction to every one, and my doores shall stand open at any time to receive any such accusation. As to matter of fact, I bless God, I can say my record is on high, though as to the manner of performing, I may not be able to justify myself, in every particular.

What will ye so requite me for my spending my spirits and strength among you, as to give credit to every report concerning me? Let me shut up all with this, though I am unworthy to be an officer in the house of God, yet God hath put me into office, and I may say to many of you, ye are the seals of my Ministry; and therefore I tell you from the Lord, *1 Tim. 5. 19. Against an Elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses*

97/9 / 7 F I N I S.

